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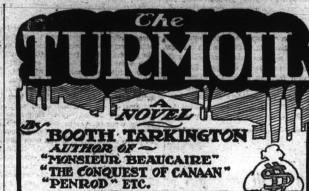
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CHAPTER I—Sheridan's attempt to make a business man of his son Bibbs by starting him in the machine shop ends ir Bibbs going to a sanitarium, a nervous wreck.

SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER II-On his return Bibbs met at the station by his sister Edith. CHAPTER III—He finds himself an in-considerable and unconsidered figure in the "New House" of the Sheridans, He sees Mary Vertrees looking at him from a summer house next door.

Summer nouse next door.

CHAPPER IV—The Vertre-Res, old town family and impoverished, call on the Sheridans, newly-rich, and afterward dissues them. Mary puts into words her parents' unepoken wish that the marry one of the Sheridan boys. CHAPTER V-At the Sheridan house warming banquet Sheridan spreads him

CHAPTER VI—Mary tells her mother about the banquet and shocks her moth-pr by talking of Jim as a matrimontal possibility.

CHAPTER VII—Jim tells Mary Biblis not a lunatio—"just queer." He proposes to Mary, who half accepts him.

CHAPTER VIII—Sheridan tells Bibbs he must go back to the machine shop as soon as he is strong enough, in spite of Bibbs' plea to be allowed to write. CHAPTER IX—Edith and Sibyl, Roscoe Sheridan's wife, quarrel over Bobby Lam-horn; Sybli goes to Mary for help to keep Lamhorn from marrying Edith, and Mary leaves her in the room alone.

CHAPTER X—Bibbs has to break to his father the news of Jim's sudden death CHAPTER XI—All the rest of the fam-ily helpless in their grief, Bibbs becomes temporary master of the house. At the funeral he meets Mary and rides home with her.

CHAPTER XII—Mrs. Sheridan plead with Bibbs to return to the machine sho for his father's sake, and he consents. CHAPTER XIII-Bibbs purposely inter-rupts a tete-a-tete between Edith and Lamhorn. He tells Edith that he over-heard Lamhorn making love to Rescos's

CHAPTER XIV-Mutual love of music CHAPTER XV-Mary sells her plane to

CHAPTER XVI-Roscoe and his wife

CHAPTER XVII—Sheridan finds Ros-oce in an intoxicated condition during of-sice hours and takes him home.

CHAPTER XVIII—Friendship between Bibbs and Mary ripens into a more inti-mate relation, and under Mary's influ-ence Bibbs decides to return to the ma-chine shop.

CHAPTER XIX—Sheridan finds his son Roscoo's affairs in a muddled condition owing to his intemperate habits. CHAPTER XX-Bibbs, under the inspiration of Mary's frieniship, makes good in the machine shop. Sheridan is injured while attempting to show the boy how to do his work.

CHAPTER XXI-Sibyl, insanely jealous over Lamhorn's attentions to Edith, makes a scene in the Sheridan home, and Lamhorn is ordered out of the house by Sheridan.

CHAPTER XXIII—Edith leaves for New York, ostensibly to visit a friend. Roscoe tells his father that he is going to quit the business and go away with his wife.

CHAPTER XXIV—Sheridan announces that he is going to take Bibbs into the office with him and make a business man of him.

Within the room, Bibbs, much annoyed, tapped his ear with his pencil. He wished they wouldn't stand talking near his door when he was trying to write. He had just taken from his trunk the manuscript of a poem be-gun the preceding Sunday afternoon, and he had some ideas he wanted to and he had some ideas he wanted to fix upon paper before they maliciously seized the first opportunity to vanish, for they were but gossamer. Bibbs was pleased with the beginnings of his poem, and if he could carry it through he meant to dare greatly with it—he would venture it upon an editor. For he had his plan of life now; his day would be of manual labor and thinking—he could think of his friend and he could think in cadences for poems, to the crashing of the strong machines—and if his father turned him out of home and out of the works, he would work elsewhere and live elsewhere. His father had the right, and it mattered very little to Bibbs—he faced the prosecution. very little to Bibbs-he faced the pros pect of a working man's lodging house without trepidation. He could find a washstand to write upon, he thought;

and every evening when he left Mary he would write a little; and he would write on holidays and on Sundays—on Sundays in the afternoon. In a lodging Sundays in the afternoon. In a lodging house, at least, he wouldn't be interrupted by his sister-in-law's choosing the immediate vicinity of his door for conversations evidently important to herself, but merely disturbing to him.

herself, but merely disturbing to him. He frowned plaintively, wishing he could think of one polite way of asking her to go away. But, as she went on, he started violently dropping manuscript and pencil upon the floor.

"I don't know whether you heard it mother Sheridan," she said, "but this old Vertrees house, next door, has been sold on foreclosure, and all they got out of it was an agreement that got out of it was an agreement that lets 'em live there a little longer. Ros-coe told me, and he says he heard Mr. Vertrees has been up and down the streets more 'n two years, tryin' to get a job he could call a 'position,' and

couldn't land it. You heard anything about it, mother Sheridan?" "Well, I did know they been doin'

"Well, I did know they been doin'
their own housework a good while
back," said Mrs. Sheridan. "And now
they're doin' the cookin', too."
Sibyl sent forth a little titter with a
sharp edge. "I hope they find something to cook! She sold her plano
mighty quick after Jim died!"

from head to foot and he was dizzy—
of all the real things he could never have dreamed in his dream the last would have been what he heard now. He felt that something incredible was happening, and that he was powerless to stop it. It seemed to him that heavy hlows were felling non his head and to stop it. It seemed to him that heavy blows were falling upon his head and upon Mary's; it seemed to him that he and Mary were being struck and beaten physically—and that something hideous impended. He wanted to shout to Sibyi to be silent, but he could not; he could only stand, swallowing and trembling.

"What I think the whole family ought to understand is just this," said

ought to understand is just this," said Sibyl, sharply. "Those people were so hard up that this Miss Vertrees start-ed after Bibbs before they knew whether he was insane or not! They'd got a notion he might be, from his be-ing in a sanitarium, and Mrs. Vertrees asked me if he was insane, the very first day Bibbs took the daughter out uto riding!" She paused a moment, ooking at Mrs. Sheridan, but listening

ly. There was no sound fro the room. I" exclaimed Mrs, Sheridan.

"It's the truth," Sibyl declared, loud-y. "Oh, of course we were all crazy bout that girl at first. We were pretty green when we moved up here, and we thought she'd get us in—but it didn't take me long to read her! Her family were down and out when it came to money—and they had to go after it, money—and they had to go accome way or another, somehow! So she started for Roscoe; but she found out pretty quick he was married, and she surned right around to Jim—and she landed him! There's no doubt about it, she had Jim, and if he'd lived you'd had another daughter-in-law before this, as sure as I stand here telling you the God's truth about it! Well—when Jim was left in the cemetery she was waiting out there to drive home with Bibbs! Jim wasn't cold—and she didn't know whether Bibbs was insane or not, but he was the only one of the rich Sheridan boys left. She had to

The texture of what was the truth made an even fabric with what was not, in Sibyl's mind; she believed every word that she uttered, and she spoke

with the rapidity and vehemence of flerce conviction. "What I feel about it is," she said, "it oughtn't to be allowed to go on.
It's too mean! I like poor Bibbs, and
I don't want to see him made such a
fool of, and I don't want to see the family made such a fool of! I like poor Bibbs, but if he'd only stop to think a minute himself he'd have to girl would be apt to fall in love with. He's better looking lately, maybe, but you know now ne was—just kind of a long white rag in good clothes. And girls like men with some go to 'em—some sort of dashingness, anyhow! No-body ever looked at poor Bibbs before, and neither'd she—no, sir! not till she'd tried both Roscoe and Jim first! It was only when her and her irst! It was only when her and her family got desperate that she-

-whiter than when he came from the sanitarium—opened the door.

He stepped across its threshold and stood looking at her. Both women screamed.

"Oh, good heavens!" cried Sibyl.
"Were you in there? Oh. I wouldn't---" She seized Mrs. Sheridan's arm, pulling her toward the stairway. "Come on, mother Sheridan;" she urged, and as the befuddled and confused lady obeyed, Sibal left a trail of noisy ex-"Good gracious! Oh, I vouldn't- Too bad! I didn't dream he was there! I wouldn't hurt his feel-ings! Not for the world! Of course he had to know some time! But, good eavens-

She heard his door close as she and Mrs. Sheridan reached the top of the stairs, and she glanced over her shoul-der quickly, but Bibbs was not following; he had gone back into his room. "He-he looked-oh, terrible bad!" tammered Mrs. Sheridan. "I-I

gave a full and truthful account of what had taken place, repeating her own remarks, and omitting only the fact that it was through her design that Bibbs had overheard them. "But as I told mother Sheridan,"

she said, in conclusion, "it might turn out for the very best that he did hear-

out for the very best that he did hear—just that way. Don't you think so, father Sheridan?"
He merely grunted in reply, and sat rubbing the thick hair on the top of his head with his left hand and lookings at the fire. He had given no sign of better impressed in any manner has been designed. ing impressed in any manner by her exposure of Mary Vertrees' character; but his impassivity did not dismay Sibyl—it was Bibbs whom she desired to impress, and she was content in that

"I'm sure it was all for the best," she "It's over now, and he knows what she is. In one way I think it was

the stairway. "I wish—I wish I knew what he was doin," she said. "He did look tertible bad. It was like something had been done to him that was—

CHAPTER XXIX. don't know what. I never saw any-ody look like he did. He looked—so

'Were you up in Mr. Bibbs' root "Yes'm. He ring bell; tole me mak



"I'll Take the Job You Offered Me. him fiah in his grate. I done buil' him nice fiah. I reckon he ain' feelin' so

well. Yes'm." He departed. "The house is warm as can be. I do wish I-"

"Oh, quit frettin'!" said Sheridan. "Well, I—I kind o' wish you hadn't said anything, Sibyl. I know you meant it for the best and all, but I don't believe it would been so much

"Mother Sheridan, you don't mean you want that kind of a girl in the family? Why she—" "I don't know, I don't know," the

troubled woman quavered. "If he liked her it seems kind of a pity to spoil it. He's so queer, and he hasn't ever taken much enjoyment. And besides, I be lieve the way it was, there was more chance of him bein' willin' to do what papa wants him to. If she wants to marry him—"
Sheridan interrupted her with a hoot ng laugh. "She don't!" he said

'You're barkin' up the wrong tree Sibyl. She ain't that kind of a girl." "But, father Sheridan, didn't she-He cut her short. "That's enough

You may mean all right, but you guess vrong. So do you, mamma."
Sibyl cried out, "Oh! But just look
low she ran after Jim—" "She did not," he said, curtly, "She

wouldn't take Jim. She turned him lown cold." "But that's impossi-

"It's not. I know she did." Sibyl looked flatly incredulous.

"And you needn't worry," he said, turning to his wife. "This won't have any effect on your idea, because there wasn't any sense to it, anyhow. D you think she'd be very likely to take Bibbs—after she wouldn't take Jim? She's a good-hearted girl, and she lets Bibbs come to see her, but if she'd ever given him one sign of encourage the way you women think, he wouldn't of acted the stubborn fool he has—he'd 'a' been at me long ago, beggin' me for some kind of a job he could support a wife on. There's nothin' in it-and I've got the same old fight with him on my hands I've had all his life-and my hands I've had all his life—and the Lord knows what he won't do to balk me! What's happened now 'll probably only make him twice as stub-

"'Sh!" Mrs. Sheridan, still in the dsorway, lifted her hand. "That's his step—he's comin' downstairs." She shrank away from the door as if she feared to have Bibbs see her. " she said, almost in a whis-

Her timorousness had its effect upon the others. Sheridan rose, frowning, but remained standing beside his chair; and Roscoe moved toward Sibyl, who stared uneasily at the open doorway. They listened as the slow steps descended the stairs and came toward

the library.

Bibbs stepped upon the threshold. and with sick and haggard eyes looked

"Sdull, it's a good deal better he knows about it," said Sibyl. "I Then he came and stood before him. shouldn't wonder it might turn out the very best thing could happened. Come be with me," he said, gently. "You won't, any more. I'll take the job you offered me."
Sheridan did not speak—he stared,

astounded and incredulous; and Bibbs had left the room before any of its occupants uttered a sound, though he went as slowly as he came. Mrs. Sheri-dan was the first to move. She went nervously back to the doorway, and then out into the hall. Bibbs had gone from the house.

Bibbs' mother had a feeling about

Bibbs' mother had a feeling about him then that she had never known before; it was indefinite and vague, but very poignant—something in her mourned for him uncomprehendingly. She feit that an awful thing had been done to him though she did not know done to him though she did not know the did not know the calciamed, sharply; and then, with thoroughgoing contempt: "Lamhorn! The fire George had built for him

was almost smothered under thick-charred ashes of paper. The lid of his trunk stood open, and the large upper tray, which she remembered to have seen full of papers and notebooks, was empty. And somehow she understood that Bibbs had given up the mysteriwhat she is. In one way I think it was lucky, because, just hearing a thing that way, a person can tell it's so—and he knows I haven't got any ax to grind except his own good and the good of the family."

Mrs. Sheridan went nervously to the door and stood there, looking toward stairs.

As Bibbs came out of the new house a Sunday trio was in course of passage upon the sidewalk: An ample young woman, placid of face; a black-clad, hin young man, whose expression was ne of habitual anxiety, habitual wari-ess and habitual eagerness. He propelled a perambulator containing the belief a peralitation of the were newly cleaned, Sundayfied, and made fit to dine with the wife's relatives.

"How'd you like for me to be that young fella, mamma?" the husband whispered. "He's one of the sons, and there ain't but two left now."

"I expect he has, like anybody else," said the young husband, "but I guess we could stand a good deal if we had

we could stand a good deal if we had his money."

"Well, maybe, if you keep on the way you been, baby 'll be as well-fixed as the Sheridans. You can't tell." She glanced back at Bibbs, who had turned north. "He walks kind of slow and stooped over, like."

"So much money in his nockets if

"So much money in his pockets it makes him sag. I guess," said the young husband, with bitter admira-

Mary, happening to glance from a Mary, happening to giance from a window, saw Bibbs coming, and she started, clasping her hands together in a sudden alarm. She met him at the door.

"Bibbs!" she cried. "What is the

matter? I saw something was terribly wrong when I— You look—" She paused, and he came in, not lifting his eyes to hers. Always when he crossed that threshold he had come with his ead up and his wistful gaze seeking ers. "Ah, poor boy!" she said, with a esture of understanding and pity. "I ow what it is!"

He followed her into the room where He followed her into the room where they always sat, and sank into a chair. "You needn't tell me," she said. "They've made you give up. Your fa-ther's won—you're going to do what e wants. You've given up

Still without looking at her, he inclined his head in affirmation.
She gave a little cry of compassion. and came and sat near him. "Bibbs," she said, "I can be glad of one thing though it's selfish. I can be glad you came straight to me. It's more to me than even if you'd come because you were happy." She did not speak again were happy." She did not speak again for a little while; then she said:

"Bibbs—dear—could you tell me about it? Do you want to?" Still he did not look up, but in a voice, shaken and husky, he asked her a question so grotesque that at first she thought she had misunderstood his "Mary," he said, "could you marry me?"

"What did you say, Bibbs?" she

asked, quietly.

His tone and attitude did not change.

"Will you marry me?"

Both her hands leaped to her cheeks -she grew red and then white. ose slowly and moved backward from him, staring at him, at first incred-ulously, then with an intense perplexity more and more luminous in her wide eyes; it was like a spoken ques tion. The room filled with strange ness in the long silence—the two wer so strange to each other. At last sh

"What made you say that?"

He did not answer.

"Bibbs, look at me!" Her voice was loud and clear. "What made you say that? Look at me!" He could not look at her, and he

what was it that made you?" she
aid. "I want you to tell me."
She went closer to him, her eyes ever brighter and wider with that in tensity of wonder. "You've given up—to your father," she said, slowly, "and then you come to ask me—" She broke off. "Bibbs, do you want me to marry you?"

"Yes," he said, just audibly.
"No!" she cried. "You do not. Then
what made you ask me? What is it

"Wait," she said. "Let me think.
It's something that happened since our walk this morning—yes, since you left "I-I me at noon. Something happened that-" She stopped abruptly, with a tremulous murmur of amazement and dawning comprehension. She remem-bered that Sibyl had gone to the new

> Bibbs swallowed painfully and con trived to say, "I do—I do want you to
> —marry me, if—if—you could."
> She looked at him, and slowly shook

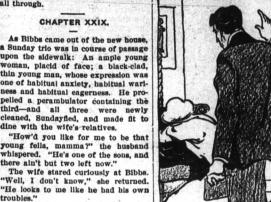
> her head. "Bibbs, do you—" Her voice was as unsteady as his—little more than a whisper. "Do you think I'm—in love with you?" "No." he said. Somewhere in the still air of the

room there was a whispered word; it did not seem to come from Mary's parted lips, but he was aware of it. Why? "I've had nothing but dreams."

Bibbs said, desolately, "but they weren't like this, Sibyl said no girl ould care about me." He smiled faintly, though still be did not look at Mary. "And when I first came home Edith told me Sibyl was so anxious to marry that she'd have married me. She meant it to express Sibyl's extremity, you see. But I hardly n

thoroughgoing contempt: "Lamhorn! That's like them!" She turned away, went to the bare little black mantel, and stood leaning upon it. Presently she asked: "When did Mrs. Roscoe

Sheridan say that 'no girl' could care about you? I'm beginning to understand—a little."
She bit her lip; there was anger in good truth in her eyes and in her voice. "Answer me once more," she said.
"Bibbs, do you know now why I stopped wearing my furs?"



Popular "Mary Mary!" He Cried Helplessly.

"I thought so! Your sister-in-law told you, didn't she?"

"I— I heard her say—"

"I think I know what happened,

new." Mary's breath came fast and her voice shook, but she spoke rapidly. "You 'heard her say' more than that. You 'heard her say' that we were bitterly poor, and on that account I tried first to marry your brother—and then—" But now she faltered, and it was only after a convulsive effort that she was able to go on. "And thenthat I tried to marry-you! You heard her say' that—and you believe that I don't care for you and that 'no girl' could care for you—but you think I am in such an 'extremity,' as Sibyl was -that you- And so, not wanting me and believing that I could not want to ask me—to marry you! What had I shown you of myself that could make

Suddenly she sank down, kneeling the lap of a chair, tears overwhelming "Mary, Mary!" he cried, helplessly

"Oh no-you-you don't understand."
"I do, though!" she sobbed. "I do!"
He came and stood beside her. "You kill me!" he said. "I can't make it plain. From the first of your loveliness to me, I was all self. It was always you that gave and I that took. I was the dependent—I did nothing but lean on you. We always talked of me, not of you. It was all about my idiotic distresses and troubles. I thought of you as a kind of wonderful being that had no mortal or human suffering except by sympathy. You seemed to lear -out of a rosy cloud-to be kind to me. I never dreamed I could do for you by anybody. And today I heard that-that you-'

"You heard that I needed to marry -someone-anybody-with money," she sobbed. "And you thought we so-so desperate-you believed

"No!" he said, quickly. "I didn't believe you'd done one kind thing for me —for that. No, no, no! I knew you'd never thought of me except generously —to give. I said I couldn't make it plain!" he cried. despairingly. "Watt!" She lifted her head and ex-

"Walt!" She lifted her head and ex-tended her hands to him unconscious-ly, like a child. "Help me up, Bibbs," Then, when she was once more upon her feet she wiped her eyes and ner reet, she when her eyes and smiled upon him ruefully and faintly, but reassuringly, as if to tell him, in that way, that she knew he had not meant to hurt her. And that smile of hers, so lamentable but so faithfully friendly, misted his own eyes, for his shamefacedness lowered them no more. "Let me tell you what you want to tell me." she said. "You can't, because

you can't put it into words—they are too humiliating for me and you're too gentle to say them. Tell me, though, isn't it true? You didn't believe that I'd tried to make you fall in love with "Never! Never for an instant!"

you want to marry me-"No, no, no!" "I believe it. Bibbs. You thought that I was fond of you; you knew i

night be-in love with you. But you thought that I might marry you without being in love with you because you did believe I had tried to marry your brother, and-...

"Mary, I only knew—for the first time—that you—that you were—" "Were desperately poor," she said. "You can't even say that! Bibbs. It was true: I did try to make Jim want to marry me. I did!" And she sank down into the chair, weeping bitterly again. Bibbs was agonized.

"Mary," he groaned, "I didn't know "Listen," she said. "Listen till I get

through—I want you to understand. We were poor, and we weren't fitted to be. We never had been, and we didn't know what to do. We'd been almost rich; there was plenty, but my father wanted to take advantage of the growth of the town; he wanted to be richer, but instead-well, just about the time your father finished building next door we found we hadn't any-thing. People say that, sometimes, meaning that they haven't anything in comparison with other people of their own kind, but we really hadn't any thing—we hadn't anything at all, Bibbs! And we couldn't do anything. You might wonder why I didn't 'try to be a stenographer'—and I wonder my self why, when a family loses its money, people always say the daugh-ters 'ought to go and be stenographers.' It's curious!—as if a wave of the hand made you into a stenographer. No, I'd been raised to be either married com fortably or a well-to-do old maid, if I chose not to marry. The poverty came

Bibbs had forgotten himself long ago; his heart broke for her. "Couldn't you— Isn't there— Won't you—" he stammered. "Mary, I'm going with father. Isn't there some way you could use the money without—without—" She gave a choked little laugh.

"You gave me something to live for," said. "You kept me alive, I think and I've hurt you like this!"

"Not you—oh no!"
"You could forgive me, Mary?"
"Oh, a thousand times!" Her right hand went out in a faltering gesture, and just touched his own for an in "But there's nothing to for

'And you can't-you can't-"Can't what, Bibbs?" "You couldn't-"

"Marry you?" she said for him.
"Yes." 'No, no, no!" She sprang up, facing him, and, without knowing what she did, she set her hands upon his breast, pushing him back from her a little. "I

an't, 1 can't! Don't you see?" "Mary—"
"No, no! And you must go now, Bibbs; I can't bear any more-

"Mary\_" "Never, never, never!" she cried, in a passion of tears. "You mustn't conse

any more. I can't see you, dear! Never,

Somehow, in helpless, stumbling obe



He Felt That Something Inevitable Was Happening.

slowly, Bibbs, but at last it was all there—and I didn't know how to be a stenographer. I didn't know how to be anything except a well-to-do old maid or somebody's wife—and 1 couldn't be a well-to-do old maid. Then, Bibbs, I did what I'd been raised to know how to do. I went out to be fascinating and be married. I did it openly, at least, and with a kind of de-cent honesty. I told your brother I had meant to fascinate him and that was not in love with him, but I let him think that perhaps I meant to marry him. I think I did mean to marry him. I had never cared for anybody, and I thought it might be there really wasn't anything more than a kind of excited I never should have done-it, because that sort of a marriage is-it's sacrilege—something would have stopped me. Something did stop me; it was your sister-in-law, Sibyl. She meant ----no harm—but she was horrible, and she put what I was doing-into such horrible words-and they truth-oh! I saw myself! She was proposing a miserable compact with me—and I couldn't breathe the air of the same room with her, though I'd so me that I would. But I couldn't assume that I would but I couldn't.

I left her, and I wrote to your brother

—just a quick scrawl. I told him just
what I'd done; I asked his pardon, and what I d done; I asked his partion, and I said I would not marry him. I post-ed the letter, but he never got it. That was the afternoon he was killed. That's all, Bibbs. Now you know what I did—and you know—me!" She pressed her clenched hands tightly against he

eyes, leaning far forward, her head bowed before him.

TO BE CONTINUED.

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Sheriff's Notice to Owner of Captured Automobile to Come Forward and Claim Same.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, Sher ff of Alamance county, on 23rd day of August, 1916, seized a quantity of spirituous liquors and at the same time captured an automobile used in conveying said scribed as follows : One 5-passenge Ford automobile.

Pursuant to Chap. 197, Sec. 2, Pub. Laws, 1915, the owner of said automobile is hereby requested to come forward and institute proper proceedings to secure possession of said automobile, otherwise same will be advertised and sold according to law. This Sept. 23, 1916. R. N. COOK, Sheriff.

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MONDAY, OCT. 9, 1916. one o'elock p. m., at the court house

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