

"Thanks, Dwight. I wasn't quite sure. The — ah — room looks awfully well since it's been done over, doesn't it?"

"Why, thank you," the housekeeper said, and flushed with pleasure. "Yes, ma'am, I was a bit nervous about it, but it's turned out very nicely. He left it all to me."

"Father did?"

"Why, yes, to be sure, Mrs. Fayles."

"That's all, Dwight, thank you," the daughter of Stephen said coolly.

There was nothing markedly cool about her eye, however, when the housekeeper was on the far side of the door. She stared at her sister and posed a blunt question:

"What does it mean?"

"I have no answer, Ina," Edith Dinsmore replied.

"He's taken to inviting people here without even mentioning it!"

"Confounded outrage for him to do a thing like that, too!" Mr. Dinsmore commented, with a broad grin. "Only his own house, mostly earned by the sweat of his brow, and he has no more license to—"

"Edith!" Mrs. Fayles said breathlessly.

"What?"

"That room *never* was done up like that for a man!"

"Why, why, Ina!" Mrs. Dinsmore gasped, and sat bolt upright. "You don't think it's possible that father—that—why, why, Ina!"

Seconds upon seconds, they stared at one another. Mrs. Fayles lost some of her excellent color. Her eyes grew very wide, her lips worked, and abruptly she voiced a great portion of all feminine psychology.

"*Who is she?*" she cried.

(To be continued in the October number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

Dizzily, weakly, Mrs. Dinsmore shook her head. Her husband, growing quite animated, laughed aloud.

"Hah! Mystery in the old mansion, eh? Something stirrin' at last! Great! I say! I've got a wonderful idea—about finding out who she is, I mean."

"What is it?" both ladies asked.

"Wait, you know, and see!" replied Dinsmore. "She's bound to—"

"Don't be absurd!" his wife snapped.

"Ina, what woman, if—if any woman, has seemed to interest father recently?"

"No woman at all, of course. That's just it!" Ina said sharply. "Father never sees anybody, except Penning, and one or two old men. When we're entertaining, father invariably disappears into his den and stays there. He doesn't go out anywhere, except to directors' meetings, and we always know to the minute when he'll be back from them. It isn't even as if he frequented the country club. Three or four of the women out there would be perfectly capable of—"

Here a growing, nameless horror paralyzed her usually active tongue. Mr. Dinsmore chuckled richly.

"May I offer just one more suggestion?" he ventured.

"Well?"

"Slip downstairs and ask father."

Mrs. Fayles's smile was mirthless.

"Do you know," said she, "that had almost occurred to me? I'm going to dress and go down to him!"

Edith arose, and with none of her usual languid effect.

"If you'll just ring for Thorpe, Wells," she said crisply, "I'll dress, too!"

## DRIFTING

FROM day to day  
We drift away  
On time's relentless tide,  
Until we reach  
The somber beach  
Where all the waves subside.

On this dark strand,  
This silent land,  
No lighthouse is in sight;  
Yet some there be  
Whose faith can see  
The dawn beyond the night.

William Hamilton Hayne

# Hobo

## HOW PAUL, THE SISSY BOY OF THE BOWERY, ACQUIRED A NEW PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

By Myron Brinig

**A**FRAID! It was astonishing how all things presented to him devils' faces, jeering:

"I'm going to crush you, to flatten you down! I'm going to blow out your life as if it were a candle flame!"

It was astonishing, and it was frightful. As far back as he could remember, Paul's day-long battle had been with fear. He was afraid of his father, of his work, of his surroundings, and, most of all, of people.

It was too bad that his mother died when he was only six years old. It had been such a solace to run to her when he was frightened. When she infolded him in her arms, what a haven, what reassurance, was there! The mysterious noises outside his bedroom door, his father's wolfish cruelty, the multitudes of strange faces he met in the streets, the numberless ogres of the city who tramped you down if you didn't get out of their way—his mother's arms had meant secure and restful escape from all of these.

But now she was gone, and there were only his father and himself in the family. Their home was one of those aimless, transitory furnished rooms in the Bowery that overlook the gaunt, clanging Elevated—the grim steel tightrope over which demons roar with a diabolic perfection. They had only this small furnished room, with its drooping, soiled window curtains and its faded, lonely photograph of Paul's mother on the wall. When his father had one of his bad fits of temper, the boy was sure that tears came into his mother's eyes, as if she were real and alive, instead of only an insentient picture, a painful likeness of that which was irreparably vanished.

Paul worked in a press clipping bureau from half past eight in the morning until half past five at night. It was his business to clip, clip, clip stories and pictures and

names from hundreds of newspapers, so that the more vain of the human race might acquaint themselves with what the world was thinking of them at that particular moment. He had been clipping away the golden minutes and hours and days of his childhood for five dusty years, ever since he had been twelve; and for this, fifteen dollars a week was his precious reward.

His days were as much alike as hospital cots all in a row. Up at seven, glad to be out of the sight of his always threatening parent; a hasty, cheerless breakfast at the German bakery down the street, and then to the eternal grind of clipping again—the whining, rasping song of the shears. After half past five he went back again to the furnished room, where his father greeted him with—

"Got your raise yet? Are you going to work for fifteen dollars a week all your life? Where's your nerve, you shrimp! You sissy!"

It was that, and worse. Usually, it was a beating, so that a disappointed ward heeler might let off the accumulating steam of a fruitless, despondent life.

There are thousands like Paul in New York—poor waifs left alone and forgotten, tail ends of the seven million. They behold the first green leaves of spring in the parks, and dream, for a blissful moment, of glades and woodlands beyond the Elevated railroads and the leering tenement windows. They watch the first evanescent snowflakes of the winter dancing aimlessly down upon streets and roofs, and wonder about trees in the country, etched in silver sorceries of beauty against December skies. They dream for a moment, an ecstatic moment of forgetfulness, before they are snatched back into the thorny avenues of the dreaded routine.