

**Booth Tarkington**

*Rumbin  
Galleries*

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# CHAPTER ONE

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IN HUMAN AFFAIRS cause and effect often behave not like the inseparable twins science says they are but like two harebrains never even acquainted. Young Howard Cattlet's acting as an usher at a classmate's wedding settled his destiny not by means of a marvelous bridesmaid but because he was unable to borrow an usher's uniform and had to have one made.

Thus, just out of college in the deep midst of the Depression, he had a home, parents, two sisters, one brother, a "cutaway" and some other clothes; but no income. Seeking his fortune, he began to commute between his native Hackertown, New Jersey, and the city of New York, where he strove patiently to join the diminished army of the employed. Systematic, he began an orderly geographical combing of northern Manhattan in mid-June, and was dishearteningly down as far as Seventeenth Street by the end of the month. Anything but an electric, eye-to-eye, make-it-happen young man, he was large, slow-spoken, good-looking somewhat solemnly; and a solemn sort of thoroughness was a sturdy element in his character. Nothing less could have led him to include in his list an advertisement for an Art Dealer's Assistant.

On the morning of the first of July, he crossed over from West Seventeenth Street (where his offer to become a Night Watchman had been declined) and walked valiantly to the

address of the Art Dealer on the eastern stretch of that same thoroughfare. Arrived at the shop, he found it to be upon the ground floor, and paused to learn what he could from its rather dusty exterior. There was a recessed half-glass door and a single display window; not a large one, yet imposing, even a little pompous, because of the gilt lettering it bore.

RUMBINGALLERIES  
CHEFSD'ŒUVRESPEINTURESSCULPTURES  
OLDMASTERSOBJETSD'ARTPERIODFURNITURE

Inside the window were two candelabra—black bronze Venuses or Muses, or somebody, upholding gilt flowers from which rose the candles—and between the candelabra, upon a mound of green velvet, was a venerable murky landscape painting from which young Howard Cattlet got only the impression that he wouldn't like to own it. Already discouraged, he nevertheless doggedly stuck to his routine, opened the half-glass door and went in.

Within the oblong room he was aware of dark old-looking paintings upon brown walls, of old sofas in faded colors, of stools, tables and commodes in unfamiliar shapes; and beyond this daunting foreground he saw at the shadowy other end of the room two people—a fair-haired young woman at a desk and a thin, baggy-kneed man who spoke to her urgently.

She interrupted him. Her clear, light voice was but too audible to the young man near the door.

"Professor Ensill, your experience with the Amwilton Museum and on the Institute's art faculty would be valuable

of course; but there isn't the slightest use for you to wait till Mr. Rumbin comes in. I mustn't hold out any false hopes to you, Professor Ensill. I'm sorry."

Professor Ensill's shoulders drooped. "Well, I'll keep on with that damn Orcas," Howard Cattlet heard him say. "I'd hoped for almost any kind of change—but all right." He turned from the desk, and, on his way out, set drearily a soiled grey felt hat upon his scholarly head. Before the door closed behind him, young Howard decided to depart also. He was in motion toward the street when the young woman at the desk rose, came forward and spoke to him.

"May I show you something?"

"No," he said. "No, I believe not."

"No? Perhaps you came in answer to Mr. Rumbin's advertisement?"

"I—yes, I believe I—"

"Then why don't you—"

"Thank you," Howard said. "I wouldn't do."

To his astonishment she said thoughtfully, "I don't know," and for a strange moment the scrutiny he had from her intelligent grey eyes was appreciative. "I think I'll take your name."

He gave it, wistfully adding his address, then again moved toward the door; but she still detained him. "Wait here."

She went to a door at the rear of the shop, opened it, called "Mr. Rumbin!" and returned to her desk. A wide silhouette appeared in the doorway; she said, "Mr. Howard Cattlet, Hackertown, New Jersey," and applied herself to a typewriter.

Mr. Rumbin came forward, a middle-aged active fat man with a glowing eye. His features, not uncomely, were flexibly expressive, like an actor's, and just now, oddly, seemed anxious to be ingratiating. "Hackertown?" he said to the solemn applicant. "Mr. Howard Cappits, you know Mr. and Mrs. Waldemar Hetzel that built the magnificent country residence looks like maybe a chateau outside Hackertown, anyways costs half a million dollars?"

"Hetzel? No, I—"

"Then you couldn't introduce 'em to me," Mr. Rumbin said regretfully, a foreign accent of elusive origin becoming a little more noticeable in his speech. "Hanover Galleries sold 'em a Claude for hundred seventy-two thousand dollars. It's nice money; it's a crime." He sighed; then smiled almost affectionately. "Where was you before?" he asked.

"Before? Where was I?" However, comprehending that the question sought for his previous business experience, the young man explained that he hadn't any; but mentioned a possible qualification. In his Junior year he had attended a course of lectures on the Fundamentals of Aesthetics and had passed the examination. He hadn't passed it prominently, he thought right to add; but still he had passed.

Mr. Rumbin, though looking at him attentively, listened with indifference; and, when the applicant produced a written approval of his morals from the Rector of St. Mark's, Hackertown, gave it but an absent glance and returned it.

"Listen," Mr. Rumbin said. "You got a cutaway suit?"

"A what?" Howard said. "Yes, I have. I've only had it on once."

“You got a useful face, too,” Mr. Rumbin observed, frank in meditation. “You don’t show nothing on it. Like you ain’t got no feelings. Like maybe you got high educated brains, too, or not; nobody would be surprised which.” Suddenly he smiled beamingly, glanced back toward the girl at the typewriter. “Putty good. Oddawise Georchie wouldn’t kept you for me to look at. I take you.”

“What? You say—”

“On prohibition,” Mr. Rumbin added quickly. “On prohibition the first couple weeks. After that, if I commence liking you, it’s permanent. Twelve dollars a week. Make it fourteen.”

“Fourteen?” Dazed, Howard seemed to perceive that his wedding garment, supplemented slightly by his face, was perhaps launching him upon a career. “Fourteen? When would you—when do I—when—”

“When you commence, Mr. Howard Cappits? To-day, now; it’s got to be some time, ain’t it?” Mr. Rumbin became confidential. “Fourteen a week payable mont’ly not in advance. It’s awful good; it’s splendid. You got everything to learn there is. Besides the cutaway, you got to have some overalls.”

“Overalls?”

“Howard,” Mr. Rumbin said, “part of the work from beings my assistant, it’s maybe some like a janitor. Sometimes you’ll be using the floor-mop; you get to wash the windows, too, and I’m going to teach you how to dust *objets d’art*—it’s puttikler. To-day, though, immediately I got to teach you something elst quick. Come to the stock room; I show you.” Then, followed dumbly, the astounding man walked to the

rear of the shop, but paused for a moment near the desk. "I intaduce you to Georchie; but don't *you* call her Georchie—her name's my sec'tary Miss Georchina Horne. When I ain't here she's the same as me. Got me, Howard?"

Miss Georgina Horne gave Howard a nod that didn't interrupt her typing. Howard murmured, and then said more distinctly, "Yes, sir."

" 'Sir'," Mr. Rumbin repeated, pleased again. " 'Sir', that's nice. Calling me 'sir' natchal I won't got to keep hollering at you for not doing it like that Bennie-feller I had last mont'." He spoke to Miss Horne. "He's got the cutaway, Georchie. At the elevenst hour you picked one with. It's like a Providence!"

He passed through the doorway that had admitted him only a few decisive minutes previously, and the owner of the cutaway went with him into a cluttered and confusing room. A few wide shelves occupied two of the walls; and, upon these shelves, framed pictures stood, not leaning against one another but separated by fixed uprights of wood. Against the third wall other pictures leaned, too large for the shelves; the middle part of the floor was crowded with old chairs and sofas, and close to the fourth wall stood cabinets, chests, console tables, commodes and an iron safe.

Mr. Rumbin put a fond, fat hand upon a panel of one of the cabinets. "Locked," he said. "Some day if I commence liking you, I show you. Ivories, porcelains, little Renaissance bronzes maybe. Ha!" He patted the black metal door of the safe. "Treasures! Some day maybe." The glow of his eyes became a glisten. "Maybe a couple pieces Limoges enamel. Maybe even one Byzantine enamel on gold—Saint Luke, size

of a playing-card, Elevenst Century maybe. Maybe a couple little Got'ic Crozier Heads, so-called. Maybe a Fourteent' Century Pyx. Who I sell 'em to?" Abruptly he became somber. "Where's a real collector not dead that ain't lost his money or elst some pig dealer ain't already got him?" He sighed; then brightened and said briskly, "We commence! You got to learn a program. We start it with the Follower of Domenikos Theotocopoulos."

"Sir?" The course in the Fundamentals of Aesthetics wasn't helping Howard much; he didn't know what Mr. Rumbin had been talking about or was talking about now. "Sir?"

"Domenikos Theotocopoulos, it's El Greco's right name," Mr. Rumbin explained kindly, completing his listener's incomprehension. "'El Greco', that only means 'The Greek', Domenikos Theotocopoulos beings a Greekish feller; so it's like somebody can't pronounce your own name and calls you 'The Hackertowner'. El Greco beings he's a painter with his own style, all peculiar, natchly he had Followers. Here, I show you." He took a picture from a shelf, set it against a chair in the light, and asked, "How you like it?"

Howard hopelessly thought it was terrible. What he saw seemed the likeness of a gigantic sentimental bearded person with a minute head. Clad in a robe of twisted blue tin, he walked barefooted among either rocks or clouds of lead foil. Howard wondered if the job depended upon his liking such a picture; but he couldn't lie flagrantly.

"I don't, sir."

"Right!" the surprising Rumbin said. "In odda worts, this fine splendid picture of mine, we wouldn't say it's a painting

by El Greco himself nor by El Greco's son and some oddas, because El Greco's son you often can't hardly tell from El Greco himself, only he's more so; but this picture you maybe could. That's why it comes first on the program. Got it?"

"Not—not yet, sir," Howard admitted. "I'm afraid I don't understand what you mean by the program."

"No? Sit down. I'll—" Mr. Rumbin interrupted himself. "Not in that chair! It's *Régence* needlepoint; it's real. Here, we sit on this *Louis Treize* sofa; it ain't." Then, as they sat together upon the sofa, he spoke suavely. "I got just time to teach you the A P C of the alphabet. In art how you hendle a program it's your heart and pants. Oddawise give up hoping you'll ever get the ideel client."

"Client, sir? You mean—"

"Client!" Mr. Rumbin said emphatically. "In art it ain't customers, it's clients. Listen intelligencely. What a dealer needs, it's ideel clients. Ideel clients, the kind that won't trust no odda dealer, there ain't many. Some the piggest dealers ever was didn't had but two. Me? Give me only one that's ideel enough and I move up to Fifty-sevent' Street! I got one coming this afternoon that might be; it's a chance. Got it?"

"Well, I—I—"

"If she gets made into a picture collector, it's all!" Mr. Rumbin became so confidential he spoke in little more than a whisper. "Six up to nine millions her husband the last seven years took in. Just found out she oughts to collect art. Some odda dealer'll get her if I ain't quick. You see, Howie?"

"I—more or less, sir. I—"

“Right!” Rumbin said. “Now we come to what’s a program. Howie, it’s uniwersal if you got a important article you want somebody to buy, only a bum would right away show him this article. If he likes skyscrapers and you want to sell him the Empire State Building, you wouldn’t say nothing about it until after you got him discouraged showing him t’ree-story buildings and a couple car-barns maybe. Then you spring the Empire State, just before you got him too tired out to be excited. That’s a program. It’s execkly what we do in the galleries this afternoon.”

“The Galleries?” Howard asked. “Where—”

“The Galleries it’s the whole place; but in puttikler it’s too a room from a door across the shop. When the client comes, I take her in the galleries; but you are waiting here. When you hear the buzzer, you pick up the Follower of Domenikos Theotocopoulos, bring it into the galleries, put it on a easel, stand looking at it just natchal till I tell you go beck and bring the next.”

“The next, sir?”

Mr. Rumbin jumped up, replaced the Follower of Domenikos Theotocopoulos upon its shelf. “Listen, I got a feeling it’s the most important day in my life! Here, one next to the odda, it’s fixed in order the program, these special fife pictures you bring in the galleries one at a time. After that you don’t do nothing at all, because it ain’t any of these fife is the one I got to sell her. That’s my great Clouet; and it I’m going to bring in myself. All you do is carry pictures. Got it?”

“Yes, sir, I—I think I—”

“Right!” Mr. Rumbin said abruptly. “Go put on the cutaway suit.”

“Sir? But it’s out at—”

“Hackertown, New Chersey,” Mr. Rumbin said. “Be back execkly half past two o’clock in it.”

“I doubt if—” young Howard began; then he had an important second thought and said, “Yes, sir.”

# CHAPTER TWO

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HOWARD CATTLET'S doubt had been of the time allowed; but by moving more rapidly than was usual with him he made it sufficient and re-entered Rumbin Galleries at almost the precise moment named. His employer, whose shining broad face showed excitement, approved of him.

"Pyootiful!" Mr. Rumbin exclaimed, and turned to Miss Georgina Horne. She was delicately passing a small feather duster over the landscape in the display window. "Georchie," Mr. Rumbin asked dramatically, "Georchie, you see it?"

Howard, slightly offended, wasn't sure whether "it" applied to himself or to his brave apparel; then discovered that something more elaborate than either was intended. Miss Horne nodded seriously at Mr. Rumbin and said, "It'll do."

"Do?" the dealer cried. "It's double a hundut per cent perfect! Me in only a nice sack suit but with a cutaway to order around—it's a picture!" Between thumb and forefinger he took a fold of his new assistant's sleeve, examined the texture. "Fine! Listen, Howie, I ain't going to ring no buzzer for you. After I got her in the galleries, I commence the program myself with my great Dutch lentscape from the window here; then next I open the door and call to Georchie. 'Miss Horne,' I'll say, 'send me the Head Assistant with the Follower of Domenikos Theotocopoulos.' Got it, Howie? It's

more connoisseur than a buzzer and like there's more of you than just you. Get beck in the stock room so she don't see you right first when she comes in."

"Yes, sir." Then, on his way to the rear of the shop, Howard heard Mr. Rumbin speaking further, though in a lowered voice, to the grey-eyed secretary.

"That puttikler dumb look he's got when you talk to him it's good, too; it's aristocratic."

Howard, reddening somewhat, went into the stock room, closed the door and sat down on the *Louis Treize* sofa that wasn't. He stared at the strange furniture and at the racks of paintings, which he suspected of being even queerer than the furniture. The Follower of What's-His-Name certainly was. "Doman—" he said aloud. "Domanigo—Follower of Domanigo Tea—" He didn't believe he'd ever be able to remember all of El Greco's real name. Maybe, though, he could learn to be a good Assistant Art Dealer without having to know how to pronounce everything distinctly. "Domanigo Teacupply," he murmured, and thought that coughing in the middle of such names might help. He tried it, wasn't satisfied, gave up, and sat apprehensive—just waiting.

Miss Horne opened the door. "It'll be easy," she said, comprehending the apprehension, though his expression was merely stolid. "Just watch Mr. Rumbin carefully and be natural. Mrs. Hollins is here. You're to take the El Greco into the galleries."

Howard rose. "El Greco? He said it was a Follower of—"

"It's changed," Miss Horne informed him, not smiling. "It's the same picture. Take it in."

He took the painting from the shelf; then paused. He'd begun to like Miss Horne's appearance and had an impulse to talk to her. "Suppose the—the client asks me a question about one of the pictures—"

"Mr. Rumbin'll answer it," Miss Horne said. "When you've put the picture on the easel don't stand between it and Mrs. Hollins. Go ahead."

He obeyed, carried the picture out of the stock room, across the shop and into the "galleries". In the center of the rather small room, a lady sat in a velvet chair, looking peevishly at the murky brown landscape, which was upon an easel at a little distance before her. She was fragile, restless-looking, thinly pretty, and what she wore was of a delicate prettiness, too; a dress of ivorine silk, a hat of cream and old rose—colors that were echoed in the frail rose-and-ivory wrap drooping from the back of her chair. Mr. Rumbin had placed an ash-tray upon a little table beside her, for her cigarette, and he stood deferentially, though with an enthusiastic facial expression, at a little distance to the right of the displayed picture. He seemed unaware of his assistant's entrance.

"Not two people in a million," he was saying, "not two people in t'ree million would right away said like you, Mrs. Kingsford J. Hollins, this great Seventeenth Century Dutch School Italian lentscape it's too brown, it's too dark. In some people it's a instinck to be a connoisseur; it's born! Mrs. Kingsford J. Hollins, I congratulate you!"

"Oh, I don't know," Mrs. Hollins said. "I only know I know that picture's too brown and it's too dark."

“Too brown and too dark is right! Look!” The dealer made a gracefully negligent gesture toward his new employee. “Look, it’s a young Herr Doktor from the University, the Galleries’ Head Assistant. Even he ain’t never noticed it’s too brownish dark. Me? It shows I could be twenty-five years a art dealer and still got something to learn. It’s mirackalous!”

He removed the landscape, set it against a wall; and Howard, inwardly upset by the doctor’s degree just conferred upon him, placed the Follower upon the easel.

“There!” Mr. Rumbin cried. “My great El Greco. You like?”

“Murder, no!” Mrs. Hollins said. “I should say not!”

Mr. Rumbin’s enthusiasm for her was unbounded. He appealed to Howard passionately. “Didn’t I told you yesterday right after I got the privilege she announces me she’ll come to Rumbin Galleries, didn’t I told you then right away I got beck she’s a collector? Simply, it’s proved!” More calmly, he addressed the client. “You’re right it ain’t no positive El Greco, Mrs. Kingsford J. Hollins. More it’s like a Follower Of. If I had Mrs. Kingsford J. Hollins’s eye for collecting I wouldn’t been no art dealer; I’d be a Museum Director.” He spoke again to Howard. “Bring my great Diaz flower piece.”

“Wait. I don’t like pictures of flowers,” Mrs. Hollins said discontentedly. “Have you got anything by Leonardo da Vinci?”

“By who?” Mr. Rumbin’s ample voice was suddenly small; he seemed enfeebled. “Who?”

“Leonardo da Vinci,” Mrs. Hollins repeated. “I like that Mona Lisa of his immensely. Haven’t you—”

“Frangkly, no.” Mr. Rumbin, swallowing, convalesced after shock. “Frangkly speaking, I ain’t never carried no Leonardos. Leonardos they’re more less scarce; some people think there ain’t almost any.” Completing his recovery, he beamed upon her again. “It’s good taste, though. Vonderful taste!” He spoke hurriedly to the Head Assistant. “Leaf out that next picture, the flowers.”

“Yes, sir.” Howard intelligently returned to the stock room, came back to the galleries bringing the third picture of the program, not the second. He placed it upon the easel from which Mr. Rumbin had removed the Follower Of. The new offering was an aged wooden panel with a surface of pigments once violent but now dulled into a dingy harmony.

“Adoration of the Magi by a Pupil of the Master of the Holy Kinship of Cologne.” Standing beside the easel, Rumbin moved his right thumb in exquisite curves as though using it to repaint the ancient picture. “Them Madonna’s robes! Sweetness! Them beards on the Wise Men! Majesty! Macknificent Flemish influenced prim—”

“Not as a gift!” Mrs. Hollins said. “You must think I’m crazy.” She looked at a diamond-bordered wrist watch. “Listen. Kingsford J. and I’re going on a three weeks motor trip to-morrow; I can’t sit around here all day.”

The new assistant, beginning to understand “programs” a little, was certain that this one had gone too far in discouraging the client and that she’d passed the precise degree of fatigue after which she could be made to get excited. He had not yet learned that his employer was himself an artist.

"Mrs. Kingsford J. Hollins," Rumbin said, in a low and breathless voice, "it makes me feel senseless. Simply, it shows a *grande dame* can be also a connoisseur. One look and you reckanized a Flemish influenced primitive ain't tasteful in your apartment. Ah, but wait!" He became dramatically commanding. "Bring my great Rosa Bonheur!"

"Yes, sir," Howard said, and turned to go; but, behind Mrs. Hollins's chair, Rumbin strode to him, whispered fiercely.

*"Ask Georchie!"*

Instantly the dealer turned smiling to his client. Howard went out to the shop and approached Miss Horne. "I think he must be mixing up the program. He told me to bring his great Rosa Bonheur."

"It's the side of a house; you'll need help," she said. "Come on."

She led the way into the stock room, and there went to an enormous picture, the largest of those that leaned, backs outward, against the wall. Coincidentally there began to stir within Howard Cattlet, as he followed the competent young figure, a new and pleasurable feeling. It seemed to him that he might become warmly interested in his new calling on its own account. An art dealer's life, he perceived, could be absorbing.

"What's he want to show her this one for?" he asked. "She's beginning to be pretty sore; why doesn't he spring the one he really wants her to buy?"

"He's still preparing her mind for that climax." Miss Horne took a soft cloth from a shelf and applied it carefully to the edges of the big picture's frame. "He knows of course

she'll say this Rosa Bonheur is preposterously too large; that's just what he wants her to say. Then, after that, he'll suddenly show her the Clouet, the portrait of a handsome Valois gentleman in jewels and velvet—a lovely small size and a really beautiful picture, too.”

“Clouet? He was French, wasn't he?”

“Flemish and French,” Miss Horne said, continuing to wipe the great gilt frame. “Of course there aren't more than ten or eleven fairly certain Clouets—the French Revolution wiped out so many records and pictures, too, you see—but likely enough one of the Clouets painted Mr. Rumbin's Clouet.”

“One of them? One of the—”

“Yes, or one of the shop-staff of one of the Clouets. Of course, though, it just might be a Sixteenth Century police portrait.”

“Sixteenth Cen—” Howard looked at the shelves laden with baffling and oppressive pictures. “Police what?”

“They didn't have photographs in those days,” she explained. “Pretty often they sent around copies of portraits of somebody who was wanted or escaped. Then take all the copies they gave their friends, and naturally you hear a good many small French portraits being called Clouet or Corneille de Lyon or—”

“Corneille—Corneille de who?” He looked at her humbly. “Do you have to know all these things about every picture in the world? How does anybody ever learn such a business?”

She gave him a glance in which there may have been some compassion; then was brisk. “You'll pick up a good deal from Mr. Rumbin—if you stay. We'd better be getting

ahead with the Rosa Bonheur; he's had about as much time as he wants for talking between. I'll only go as far with you as the door to the galleries."

One at each end of the heavy picture, they lifted it, carried it from the stock room and across the shop. Miss Horne proved to be one of those surprising girls who don't look very strong but are; she was also capably executive. Near the door of the galleries she whispered, "Stop here!" and the two stood still. Mr. Rumbin could be heard speaking appetizingly of paintings of animals—of Paulus Potter's immortal Bull, of superb cows by Troyon, of Monticelli's jewelled fowls, of splendid goats by Salvatore Rosa. Other sonorous names rolled out from the unctuous voice; and Howard Cattlet, beginning to be fascinated, wished he knew something about them. Also, he hoped they were impressing Mrs. Hollins, and thus, almost unconsciously, the young man had the first symptoms of a loyal apprenticeship.

Miss Georgina Horne coughed rather loudly; her employer interrupted himself.

"Ah! She arrive', my great Rosa Bonheur!"

He came hurrying forth, took Miss Horne's place; and then, as he and his assistant brought their burden into the galleries and placed it before Mrs. Hollins, reproached him gayly. "Ah, these young Herr Doktors! *Never* should you lift a such picture alone! Why didn't you call Schmidt or Raoul to help you?"

"Sir?"

"Never mind," Rumbin said hastily. "She's too pig to go on the easel, set her down on the floor; we each holt her up

at a corner. There! Mrs. Kingsford J. Hollins, the greatest of all animal painters, Rosa Bonheur! You seen her works in the Louvre, in the Metropolitan. I ask you as a connoisseur, which? Them or this, which?" He used his free thumb as if repainting again. "This left ear of this horse! That little passage there! Organization! Seven horses—four great grand foreground horses putty near life size, and t'ree behind in the beckground—altogedda seven horses. Action! Movement! Power! Simply, it's majesty!"

Howard looked at Mrs. Hollins expectantly, awaiting her denunciation of the seven horses; but, to his astonishment, her mood of bored annoyance seemed to change. She stopped smoking.

"Listen!" she said. "Why didn't you show this one to me in the first place? I got an uncle used to have horses like that on his stock farm. I always did like horses. Yessir; that's a right good picture." Her appreciation increased; she nodded decisively. "I'll take that one," she said.

"Madame?" Mr. Rumbin stared at her, chop-fallen. "You say—you say you wish to acquire this great pig Rosa Bonheur?"

"I'll take it," she said, rising. "I'll take it if you can find a nice place for it in my apartment. Send it up this afternoon." She turned to Howard amiably. "Doctor Um, do you mind telling my chauffeur to bring up the car?"

Howard went out to the street and found a glossy cream-colored touring-car already before the door. He spoke to the chauffeur, who descended and stood by. Mrs. Hollins came from the shop. Mr. Rumbin accompanied her, voluble upon the lifelong joy she'd have in her great Rosa Bonheur and

the honor her visit had done him. Bowing from where his waist should have been, he kissed her gloved hand, bowed her into the car and bowed thrice again as it moved away. Then, with a stricken face, he rapidly preceded his assistant into the shop.

“Georchie!” he cried hoarsely to Miss Horne, who was replacing the Italianate Dutch landscape in the window. “Georchie, complete hell she knocked out of the program! The Clouet she never even seen, buys the Rosa Bonheur, never asks the price, I’m ruined!”