JAMES MATTHEW BARRIE

EXTENDED ANNOTATED EDITION

TOMMY AND GRIZEL

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J. M. Barrie

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James Matthew Barrie – A Personal Sketch By Hattie Tyng Griswold

IAN MACLAREN recently related the following incident, illustrating the pride of the common people of Scotland in their most popular author. He said :

" Not long ago, I was travelling from Aberdeen to Perth. A man sitting opposite studied me for a minute, and then, evidently being convinced that I had average intelligence, and could appreciate a great sight if I saw it, he said, ' If you will stand up with me at the window, I will show you something in a minute ; you will only get a glimpse suddenly and for an instant.' I stood. He said, ' Can you see that ? ' I saw some smoke, and said so. ' That 's Kirriemuir,' he answered. I sat down, and he sat opposite me, and watched my face to see that the fact that I had had a glimpse of Kirriemuir, or rather of its smoke, was one I thoroughly appreciated, and would carry in retentive memory for the rest of my life. Then I said, ' Mr. Barrie was born there.' ' Yes,' he said, ' he was ; and I was born there myself.' "

This intense loyalty to every thing Scotch, this pride in the achievements of any countryman, this appreciation of the national element in literature, is one of the

most pleasing traits of the Scotch character, though it has. its humorous side, and has roused inextinguishable laughter in its day. Much as the outside world praises and prizes the best work of such men as Stevenson, Barrie, Ian MacLaren, and others, it is only people who have lived with and loved the bracken and the heather, who feel its subtlest charm. This fragrance is in every leaf of these Scottish stories, and it cannot stir the alien heart as it does that of the native. What a classic land its writers have made of Scotland, the wild and rugged, and barren little spot ! The land touched by the pen of Scott is as classic as Greece, that connected with the life of Burns no less so, and the home and haunts of Carlyle, if loved by a lesser number, are loved just as passionately. And now we have a new Delphian vale in Thrums or Kirriemuir, and still another in Drumtochty. Time will test the fame of these new men, and prove their staying qualities, but at present they really seem to have made a high bid for continued favor, in the hearts of so steadfast a people as the Scotch.

James Matthew Barrie was born in Kirriemuir on May 9, 1860. Kirriemuir is sixty miles north of Edinburgh, and Mr. Barrie has made all the world familiar with the little secluded hamlet, by his descriptions of Thrums and its inhabitants. We know these people as we do our personal friends, and if we could but sit at the window in Thrums we could call many of their names as they pass by. Leeby and Jess, alas ! we should not see; they are asleep under the brachen and the moss on the hill overlooking Kirriemuir, and that little burgh seems thinly inhabited now that they are gone.

The day of James Barrie's birth was always remembered in his family by the fact that six hair-bottomed chairs were brought into the house upon that day, chairs which had been longed for, and waited and worked for, by that capable and ambitious woman, Margaret Ogilvie, his mother. He heard the description of the coming of the chairs so often afterwards, and shared in the toil and saving to get other things to place beside the chairs, for so long a time, that he feels as if he remembered the event for himself; and this is the case with many of the incidents of his mother's life which had been conned over so often in his hearing. From six years old he takes up the thread of memory for himself, and sees his mother's face, and knows that God sent her into the world to open the minds of all who looked to beautiful thoughts. His life was very closely bound up with hers from this time on, and the history of the one is that of the other. What she had been and what he should be, were the great subjects between them in his boyhood, and the stories she told him, for she was a born storyteller, took such hold on his memory, and so stirred his imagination, that they afterward laid the foundations of his fame, when he published them in his first volume of " Auld Licht Idylls." Never were such friends as he and his mother all through his youth, and her mark was indelibly set upon him by that time. She had a numerous family of children, but Jamie seemed to be different to her from the others. Some peculiar mystic grace had made him only the child of his mother," and it was a worshipful love on the part of both that held them together. This mother was a great reader, and they read many books together when he was a boy, " Robinson Crusoe ' being the first. This led to his

writing stories himself, and reading them to her. She was a sharp critic, and he served his apprenticeship under her. They were all tales of adventure, he tells us ; the scene lay in unknown parts, desert islands, and enchanted gardens, and there were always knights in armor riding on black chargers at full tilt. At the age of twelve he made up his mind to be an author, and she aided and abetted him in all the ways known to a loving mother's heart. About this time, or a little later, he was sent to the Dumfries Academy, where his brother was Inspector of Schools. He was a bright scholar, and very happy there, where he made unusual progress in his studies.

At eighteen years of age he entered the University at Edinburgh, and devoted himself especially to the study of literature. He went but little into the society of the place, and made but few friends among the students, being considered " reserved." But he had opportunity for more reading than ever before, and became quite absorbed in the multitude of books to which he had access for the first time. He also began the writing of literary criticisms for the " Edinburgh Courant ' at this time. He showed a true touch even in his first writing, which may have been owing somewhat to his years of practice in the garret at home, on stories which must be made to please his mother. Carlyle, whom he had sometimes seen while at Dumfries, and who became his hero, exerted a great influence upon him at this time. He began to look upon life through the eyes of his mentor, and to value the sturdy virtues which form so large a part of his discourse. He caught some of his phrases, which were a stumbling-block to his mother, although she too was an ardent admirer of the rugged Scotchman. Sincerity, truth, courage, strength, these became his watchwords, and their influence can be seen in his writings to this day. The poetry of common life, the hardy virtues of the humble, the sweetness of the domestic life in many lowly cottages, the humorous side of petty religious controversy, these became his theme, and the world turned away from the conventional novel about Lady Arabella and Lord Vincent Vere de Vere, and the vicar and the curate, and the old family solicitor of the Tulkinghorn type, to read about " The Courting of T'nowhead's Bell." He heeded Longfellow's advice, although very likely he had never heard of it, in the verse which says,

" That is best which lieth nearest,
Shape from this thy work of art."

How many times of late we have seen the wisdom of this course exemplified ! Instead of going back to the past, or flying to the ends of the earth for some new and impossible theme, we have seen our most popular writers sitting down on their own doorsteps, and describing what actually passed before their eyes, with the result that the whole reading world wanted to see just what they saw, and with their eyes. Miss Murfree among the Tennessee mountains, Miss Wilkins in hackneyed New England, Olive Schreiner on a South African Farm, Mr. Cable among the Creoles of Louisiana, Kipling with the British army in India, Thomas Nelson Page in the New South, Mary Hallock Foote in the Western mining-camps, and many others who have achieved late successes, have done so on their own ground, in reporting the actual life of the people

with whom they were familiar. That repulsive realism which concerns itself only with disease and vice and abnormal conditions will be crowded out by the better realism of the new school. While we have among the younger writers a few who follow the lead of Ibsen and of Zola, and insist upon dragging into the light all the hidden things of life, and whose writings consequently are redolent of decay, this newer group give us novels of character, and our interest lies in its development amid the varied circumstances depicted, and not in some hidden crime or adulterous amour, which is exploited with all its disgusting details, till the revolted reader throws it into the fire, which alone can purify its poisonous pages. That our presses have teemed with this kind of books for a few years past, is a well-known fact. About them we could say as Thoreau said about certain poems of Walt Whitman,

" He does not celebrate love at all. It is as if the beasts spoke. I think that men have not been ashamed of themselves without reason. No doubt there have always been dens where such deeds were unblushingly recited, and it is no merit to compete with their inhabitants."

But in the very midst of this passing phase of the gospel of dirt, were flung such books as " A Window in Thrums " and " The Bonnie Brier Bush," and their reception proved that the heart of the reading world is sound, although it is sometimes beguiled into the haunts of leprosy for a season.

Graduating from the University in Edinburgh in 1882, Barrie necessarily began to look at once for work, for his father had already done perhaps more than he was able to do for him, and there was a numerous family whose needs had to be considered. The famous managing of Mrs. Barrie had been put to many hard tests in its time, and her son knew too well the inner details of the home life, to wish to live a moment longer than was necessary at the expense of his parents. He tells us in one place about the little parlor which was the pride of his mother's heart:

" Every article of furniture, from the chairs that came into the world with me, and have worn so much better, though I was new and they were second-hand, to the mantel-border of fashionable design which she sewed in her seventieth year, having picked up the stitch in half a lesson, has its story of fight and attainment for her; hence her satisfaction."

The furnishing of the family wardrobe also had been with her a series of skirmishes, in which she had plucked from every well-dressed person she had chanced to see, ideas for the making or re-making of garments for one or another of the family. And she made very good imitations indeed of the clothing of the better dressed people, out of the poorer resources of her cottage. She would imitate the cut of a garment, if only she could get one long satisfying look at it, in a manner that would have been the envy of some famous dressmakers. And as to patterns and colors her taste was perfect. Her son dwells lovingly on all these details, in his memorial of her, which is in part a history of his own life, so interwoven were their existences. He made what

haste he could to earn money for himself and her. For the greatest of his pleasures in the earning came to be what he could do for her to gratify her innocent pride and her generous impulses toward others. At this time his sister saw an advertisement for a leader-writer by the Nottingham " Daily Journal," and with great trepidation and excitement the family awaited the result of his application for the place. Great was the rejoicing when he received the appointment, at what seemed to them the magnificent salary of three guineas a week. For this sum he was to write an article, and notes on political and social topics every day. This journalistic training was doubtless of great value to him, and he describes it somewhat in a novel written some years afterward, called " When a Man 's Single." In it he narrates how the young man, who had accepted a place on the paper, first appeared at the office of the " Daily Mirror." He says:

" During the time the boy took to light Mr. Licquarish's fire, a young man in a heavy overcoat knocked more than once at the door in the alley, and then moved off as if somewhat relieved that there was no response. He walked round and round the block of buildings, gazing upward at the windows of the composing-room ; and several times he ran against other pedestrians, on whom he turned fiercely, and would then have begged their pardons had he known what to say. Frequently he felt in his pocket to see if his money was still there, and once he went behind a door and counted it. There were three pounds seventeen shillings altogether, and he kept it in a linen bag that had been originally made for carrying worms when he went fishing. . . . Rob had stopped at the door a score of times and then turned away. He had arrived in Silchester in the afternoon, and come straight to the ' Mirror ' office to look at it. Then he had set out in quest of lodgings, and having got them, had returned to the passage. He was not naturally a man crushed by a sense of his own unworthiness, but looking up at these windows and at the shadows that passed them every moment, he felt far away from his saw-mill. What a romance to him, too, was in the glare of the gas, and in the ' Mirror ' bill that was being reduced to pulp on the wall at the mouth of the close ! It had begun to rain heavily, but he did not feel the want of an umbrella, never having possessed one in Thrums."

The new reporter finally made his way in, and was introduced by the editor to the reporters' room, where the following conversation took place :

" ' What do you think of George Frederick (the editor) ? ' asked the chief, after he had pointed out to Rob the only chair that such a stalwart reporter might safely sit on. ' He was very pleasant,' said Rob. 'Yes,' said Billy Kirker, thoughtfully, ' there 's nothing George Frederick wouldn't do for any one if it could be done gratis.' ' And he struck me as an enterprising man.' ' Enterprise without outlay, is the motto of this office,' said the chief. 'But the paper seems to be well conducted,' said Rob, a little crestfallen. 'The worst conducted in England,' said Kirker, cheerfully. Rob asked how the ' Mirror ' compared with the ' Argus.' ' They have six reporters to our three,' said Kirker, ' but we do double work and beat them.' ' I suppose there is a great deal of rivalry between the staffs of the two papers ? ' Rob asked, for he had read of such things. ' Oh,

no,' said Kirker, ' we help each other. For instance, if Daddy Welsh, the " Argus " chief, is drunk, I help him ; and if I 'm drunk, he helps me.' "

This initiatory conversation was closed by Kirker asking Rob to lend him five bob, and after that Rob took two books, which had been handed him for review, arid made his way to his lodgings. He sat up far into the night reading one of the books, " The Scorn of Scorns," and writing a murderous review of it, and upon the effect of that review hangs the rest of the story.

However literal this description of his first adventures as a journalist may or may not be, there he was, at last, engaged in the profession of literature. No prouder or happier man walked the earth. He remained in Nottingham about two years, and during that time he began sending articles to various London publications. The first paper to accept any of these contributions was the " Pall Mall Gazette." But others were accepted after a while, and the young man began to think seriously of leaving his position in Nottingham and going up to London. The great city was calling to him, as it calls to so many young men of talent and ambition every year. He began to hear his days before him, and the music of his life. He was

" Yearning for the large excitement which the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field."

And it was not long after he began hearing the voices, before he " saw the lights of London flaring in the dreary dawn." The " St. James Gazette " accepting a couple of articles was the decisive event with him. After that he concluded to make the rash venture, although his mother gave way to her fears, and protested earnestly against it, fearing he would have to sleep in the parks, and be robbed or murdered whatever way he might turn. Mr. Barrie says :

" While I was away at college she drained all available libraries for books about those who go to London to live by the pen, and they all told the same shuddering tale. London, which she never saw, was to her a monster that licked up country youths as they stepped from the train ; there were the garrets in which they sat abject, and the park seats where they passed the night. Those park seats were the monster's glaring eyes to her, and as I go by them now she is nearer to me than when I am in any other part of London. I dare say that when night comes, this Hyde Park, which is so gay by day, is haunted by the ghosts of many mothers, who run, wild-eyed, from seat to seat looking for their sons. ..." If you could only be sure of as much as would keep body and soul together,' my mother would say with a sigh. 'With something over to send to you.' ' You couldn't expect that at the start.' "

He says further of this time :

"In an old book I find columns of notes about works projected at this time, nearly all to consist of essays on deeply uninteresting subjects ; the lightest

was to be a volume on the older satirists, beginning with Skelton and Tom Nash the half of that manuscript still lies in a dusty chest. The only story was one about Mary Queen of Scots, who was also the subject of many unwritten papers. Queen Mary seems to have been luring me to my undoing ever since I saw Holyrood, and I have a horrid fear that I may write that novel yet. That anything could be written about my native place never struck me."

The " St. James Gazette " continued to take his articles after he went up to London, though the editor had advised him not to come, and he began writing his " Auld Licht Idylls." The first book which he put forth was a satire on London life, called "Better Dead," which was not a success. But his newspaper articles had begun to attract attention, and by the time " Auld Licht Idylls ' appeared, he had achieved a reputation, at least a local one. This book had an immediate success, and ran rapidly through several editions. His mother had been an Auld Licht in her youth. They were a very small but fierce sect who had seceded from the Presbyterian church, and maintained themselves in isolation from all other Christians for some time. Mrs. Barrie, knowing them from the inside, could tell all sorts of quaint and marvellous tales about them, whose humor was sure to please. It was from her stories that the Idylls were mainly drawn, so she was in a sense a collaborator with her son in their production. But she had no faith in them as literature, and considered an editor who would publish them as " rather soft." When she read the first one she was quite alarmed, and, fearing the talk of the town, hid the paper from all eyes. While her son thought of her as showing them proudly to all their friends, she was concealing them fearfully in a bandbox on the garret stair. It amused her greatly, from that time on, that the editors preferred the Auld Licht articles to any others, and she racked her brain constantly for new details. Once she said to her son : " I was fifteen when I got my first pair of elastic-sided boots. Tell the editor that my charge for this important news is two pounds ten." And she made brave fun of those easily fooled editors day after day. The publishers were very shy of the book when it was offered to them, and it went the round of their offices before it found a purchaser. But at last a firm sufficiently daring was found by a good friend, an editor, and Mrs. Barrie had the great satisfaction of seeing her son's name really on a book-cover, and in knowing in her inmost heart that the book was largely her own, though that she would never admit, even in the home circle.

When the next book was ready, there was no looking for a publisher, all were eager now to use his material. A few months only elapsed before the second successful book was published. It had run serially through a weekly paper, and was republished from that. It was called " When a Man 's Single," and embodied some of his journalistic experiences, as has been told. In rapid succession came " A Window in Thrums," " My Lady Nicotine," and " The Little Minister." In the first-named he went back to his childhood's home, and gave pictures of the life in it and in the village, with his mother and sister for two of its leading characters. He opens it with a description of the House on the Brae :

" On the bump of green ground which the brae twists, at the top of the brae, and within cry of T'nowhead Farm, still stands a one-story house, whose whitewashed walls, streaked with the discoloration that rain leaves, look yellow when the snow comes. In the old days the stiff ascent left Thrums behind, and where is now the making of a suburb was only a poor row of dwellings and a manse, with Hendry's house to watch the brae. The house stood bare, without a shrub, in a garden whose paling did not go all the way round, the potato pit being only kept out of the road, that here sets off southward, by a broken dyke of stones and earth. On each side of the slate-colored door was a window of knotted glass. Ropes were flung over the thatch to keep the roof on in wind.

" Into this humble abode I would take any one who cares to accompany me. But you must not come in a contemptuous mood, thinking that the poor are but a stage removed from beasts of burden, as some cruel writers of these days say ; nor will I have you turn over with your foot the shabby horse-hair chairs that Leeby kept so speckless, and Hendry weaved for years to buy, and Jess so loved to look on."

The window at Thrums was that of Jess :

" For more than twenty years she had not been able to go so far as the door, and only once while I knew her was she ben in the room. With her husband, Hendry, and her only daughter, Leeby, to lean upon, and her hand clutching her staff, she took twice a day, when she was strong, the journey between her bed and the window where stood her chair."

Again he writes :

" Ah, that brae ! The history of tragic little Thrums is sunk into it like the stones it swallowed in winter. We have all found the brae long and steep in the spring of life. Do you remember how the child you once were sat at the foot of it and wondered if a new world began at the top ? It climbs from a shallow burn, and we used to sit on the brig a long time before venturing to climb. As boys,' we ran up the brae. As men and women, young and in our prime, we almost forgot that it was there. But the autumn of life comes, and the brae grows steeper ; then the winter, and once again we are as the child, pausing apprehensively on the brig. Yet we are no longer the child ; we look now for no new world at the top, only for a little garden, and a tiny house, and a hand loom in the house. It is only a garden of kail and potatoes, but there may be a line of daisies, white and red, on each side of the narrow footpath, and honeysuckle over the door. Life is not always hard, even after backs grow bent, and we know that all braes lead only to the grave."

It was the plainest and simplest of books, all about a handful of peasants who spoke in broad Scotch, which many times the reader did not fully understand, but it caught the eye of the world, and it went to its heart. It was the literary success of the year, and Margaret Ogilvie should have been satisfied. But there was a thorn in her side, and that was the name of Robert Louis Stevenson. She

had great fear that he was still considered the superior of her Jamie. At first she refused to read a word he had written, deriding him every time his name was mentioned. Then, her curiosity getting the better of her prejudice, she read him secretly, to convince herself of her son's superiority, but not getting great comfort from the experiment. Then she scoffed more than ever at "that Stevenson man," and tossed her head, and her soft tender face became hard. " I could never thole his books," she would say vindictively. But at last she was caught in the act of reading " The Master of Ballantrae ' by her son, who peeped through the keyhole, and " muttering the music to herself, nodding her head in approval, and taking a stealthy glance at the foot of each page before she began at the top." But that was nothing to the enchantment which " Treasure Island " had for her, when once she had opened its fascinating pages. They had not dared to laugh at her, for fear she would give up her pleasure entirely, and so it was understood in the family that she only read him to make sure of his unworthiness. But the night when she became so absorbed in it that she did not know when bedtime came, and they remonstrated with her, and coaxed her to give it up and go to bed, she exclaimed quite passionately, " I dinna lay my head on a pillow this night till I see how that laddie got out of the barrel; ' and the secret was told, and they knew that Stevenson had conquered his last enemy. But never in words did she admit it. To the last she disliked to see letters come to her son with the Vailima postmark on them.

" The Little Minister " came as a revelation of Mr. Barrie's sustained power, to many people who had read his sketches. It is probably his finest piece of work thus far. Its success was overwhelming ; many people were fascinated with it who cared little for his first efforts. One must be something of a humorist himself to thoroughly appreciate his earlier work, and all readers are not endowed with that quality. But most readers enjoyed the new story, and its author became the drawing card in periodical literature. Suddenly in the midst of his fame, and a young man's delight in it, he left London and went back to Kirriemuir to remain. The long invalidism of his mother had taken on dangerous symptoms, and the faithful daughter, who had no breath, no being, but in hers, could not care for her alone, for she was herself smitten with a lingering but fatal disease. For a long time the two faithful watchers tended the dying mother, doing everything themselves, for she would not allow any one else even to touch her, and at last the worn-out daughter --as her brother describes it " died on foot," three days before the mother. They were buried together, on her seventy-sixth-birthday. Her son writes : " I think God was smiling when He took her to Him, as He had so often smiled at her during those seventy-six years."

Mr. Barrie continued to live on at Viewmount House, the little villa built in recent years on the outskirts of Kirriemuir. It was there that he was married, in 1894, to Miss Mary Ansell, an English girl, and really began life for himself, at the age of thirty-four. His last novel, " Sentimental Tommy," deals largely with the boyhood of the hero, and the scene is laid in London and in Thrums alternately. Whether that locality will serve much longer as literary material is a question which readers will answer differently, according to whether they

really belong to the Barrie cult or not. On those who worship at the inner shrine it never palls, but the general reader may perhaps complain of monotony, and yearn for a new setting for the coming tales.

His work " Margaret Ogilvie," is a memorial of his mother from which we have quoted largely in this article.

TOMMY AND GRIZEL

PART I

Chapter I

HOW TOMMY FOUND A WAY

O.P. Pym, the colossal Pym, that vast and rolling figure, who never knew what he was to write about until he dipped grandly, an author in such demand that on the foggy evening which starts our story his publishers have had his boots removed lest he slip thoughtlessly round the corner before his work is done, as was the great man's way—shall we begin with him, or with Tommy, who has just arrived in London, carrying his little box and leading a lady by the hand? It was Pym, as we are about to see, who in the beginning held Tommy up to the public gaze, Pym who first noticed his remarkable indifference to female society, Pym who gave him——But alack! does no one remember Pym for himself? Is the king of the *Penny Number* already no more than a button that once upon a time kept Tommy's person together? And we are at the night when they first met! Let us hasten into Marylebone before little Tommy arrives and Pym is swallowed like an oyster.

This is the house, 22 Little Owlet Street, Marylebone, but which were his rooms it is less easy to determine, for he was a lodger who flitted placidly from floor to floor according to the state of his finances, carrying his apparel and other belongings in one great armful, and spilling by the way. On this particular evening he was on the second floor front, which had a fireplace in the corner, furniture all his landlady's and mostly horsehair, little to suggest his calling save a noble saucerful of ink, and nothing to draw attention from Pym, who lolled, gross and massive, on a sofa, one leg over the back of it, the other drooping, his arms extended, and his pipe, which he could find nowhere, thrust between the buttons of his waistcoat, an agreeable

pipe-rack. He wore a yellow dressing-gown, or could scarcely be said to wear it, for such of it as was not round his neck he had converted into a cushion for his head, which is perhaps the part of him we should have turned to first It was a big round head, the plentiful gray hair in tangles, possibly because in Pym's last flitting the comb had dropped over the banisters; the features were ugly and beyond life-size, yet the forehead had altered little except in colour since the day when he was near being made a fellow of his college; there was sensitiveness left in the thick nose, humour in the eyes, though they so often watered; the face had gone to flabbiness at last, but not without some lines and dents, as if the head had resisted the body for a space before the whole man rolled contentedly downhill.

He had no beard. "Young man, let your beard grow." Those who have forgotten all else about Pym may recall him in these words. They were his one counsel to literary aspirants, who, according as they took it, are now bearded and prosperous or shaven and on the rates. To shave costs threepence, another threepence for loss of time—nearly ten pounds a year, three hundred pounds since Pym's chin first bristled. With his beard he could have bought an annuity or a cottage in the country, he could have had a wife and children, and driven his dog-cart, and been made a church-warden. All gone, all shaved, and for what? When he asked this question he would move his hand across his chin with a sigh, and so, bravely to the barber's.

Pym was at present suffering from an ailment that had spread him out on that sofa again and again—acute disinclination to work.

Meanwhile all the world was waiting for his new tale; so the publishers, two little round men, have told him. They

have blustered, they have fawned, they have asked each other out to talk it over behind the door.

Has he any idea of what the story is to be about?

He has no idea.

Then at least, Pym—excellent Pym—sit down and dip, and let us see what will happen.

He declined to do even that. While all the world waited, this was Pym's ultimatum:

"I shall begin the damned thing at eight o'clock."

Outside, the fog kept changing at intervals from black to white, as lazily from white to black (the monster blinking); there was not a sound from the street save of pedestrians tapping with their sticks on the pavement as they moved forward warily, afraid of an embrace with the unknown; it might have been a city of blind beggars, one of them a boy.

At eight o'clock Pym rose with a groan and sat down in his stocking-soles to write his delicious tale. He was now alone. But though his legs were wound round his waste-paper basket, and he dipped often and loudly in the saucer, like one ringing at the door of Fancy, he could not get the idea that would set him going. He was still dipping for inspiration when T. Sandys, who had been told to find the second floor for himself, knocked at the door, and entered, quaking.

"I remember it vividly," Pym used to say when questioned in the after years about this his first sight of Tommy, "and I hesitate to decide which impressed me more, the richness of his voice, so remarkable in a boy of sixteen, or his serene

countenance, with its noble forehead, behind which nothing base could lurk."

Pym, Pym! it is such as you that makes the writing of biography difficult. The richness of Tommy's voice could not have struck you, for at that time it was a somewhat squeaky voice; and as for the noble forehead behind which nothing base could lurk, how could you say that, Pym, you who had a noble forehead yourself?

No; all that Pym saw was a pasty-faced boy sixteen years old, and of an appearance mysteriously plain; hair light brown, and waving defiance to the brush; nothing startling about him but the expression of his face, which was almost fearsomely solemn and apparently unchangeable. He wore his Sunday blacks, of which the trousers might with advantage have borrowed from the sleeves; and he was so nervous that he had to wet his lips before he could speak. He had left the door ajar for a private reason; but Pym, misunderstanding, thought he did it to fly the more readily if anything was flung at him, and so concluded that he must be a printer's devil. Pym had a voice that shook his mantelpiece ornaments; he was all on the same scale as his ink-pot. "Your Christian name, boy?" he roared hopefully, for it was thus he sometimes got the idea that started him.

"Thomas," replied the boy.

Pym gave him a look of disgust "You may go," he said. But when he looked up presently, Thomas was still there. He was not only there, but whistling—a short, encouraging whistle that seemed to be directed at the door. He stopped quickly when Pym looked up, but during the remainder of the interview he emitted this whistle at intervals, always with that anxious glance at his friend the door; and its strained joviality was in odd contrast with his solemn face, like a cheery tune played on the church organ.

"Begone!" cried Pym.

"My full name," explained Tommy, who was speaking the English correctly, but with a Scots accent, "is Thomas Sandys. And fine you know who that is," he added, exasperated by Pym's indifference. "I'm the T. Sandys that answered your advertisement."

Pym knew who he was now. "You young ruffian," he gasped, "I never dreamt that you would come!"

"I have your letter engaging me in my pocket," said Tommy, boldly, and he laid it on the table. Pym surveyed it and him in comic dismay, then with a sudden thought produced nearly a dozen letters from a drawer, and dumped them down beside the other. It was now his turn to look triumphant and Tommy aghast.

Pym's letters were all addressed from the Dubb of Prosen Farm, near Thrums, N.B., to different advertisers, care of a London agency, and were Tommy's answers to the "wants" in a London newspaper which had found its way to the far North. "X Y Z" was in need of a chemist's assistant, and from his earliest years, said one of the letters, chemistry had been the study of studies for T. Sandys. He was glad to read, was T. Sandys, that one who did not object to long hours would be preferred, for it seemed to him that those who objected to long hours did not really love their work, their heart was not in it, and only where the heart is can the treasure be found.

"123" had a vacancy for a page-boy, "Glasgow Man" for a photographer; page-boy must not be over fourteen, photographer must not be under twenty. "I am a little over fourteen, but I look less," wrote T. Sandys to "123"; "I am a

little under twenty," he wrote to "Glasgow Man," "but I look more." His heart was in the work.

To be a political organizer! If "H and H," who advertised for one, only knew how eagerly the undersigned desired to devote his life to political organizing!

In answer to "Scholastic's" advertisement for janitor in a boys' school, T. Sandys begged to submit his name for consideration.

Undoubtedly the noblest letter was the one applying for the secretaryship of a charitable society, salary to begin at once, but the candidate selected must deposit one hundred pounds. The application was noble in its offer to make the work a labour of love, and almost nobler in its argument that the hundred pounds was unnecessary.

"Rex" had a vacancy in his drapery department. T. Sandys had made a unique study of drapery.

Lastly, "Anon" wanted an amanuensis. "Salary," said "Anon," who seemed to be a humourist, "salary large but uncertain." He added with equal candour: "Drudgery great, but to an intelligent man the pickings may be considerable." Pickings! Is there a finer word in the language? T. Sandys had felt that he was particularly good at pickings. But amanuensis? The thing was unknown to him; no one on the farm could tell him what it was. But never mind; his heart was in it.

All this correspondence had produced one reply, the letter on which Tommy's hand still rested. It was a brief note, signed "O.P. Pym," and engaging Mr. Sandys on his own recommendation, "if he really felt quite certain that his heart (treasure included) was in the work." So far good, Tommy had thought when he received this answer, but

there was nothing in it to indicate the nature of the work, nothing to show whether O.P. Pym was "Scholastic," or "123," or "Rex," or any other advertiser in particular. Stop, there was a postscript: "I need not go into details about your duties, as you assure me you are so well acquainted with them, but before you join me please send (in writing) a full statement of what you think they are."

There were delicate reasons why Mr. Sandys could not do that, but oh, he was anxious to be done with farm labour, so he decided to pack and risk it. The letter said plainly that he was engaged; what for he must find out slyly when he came to London. So he had put his letter firmly on Pym's table; but it was a staggerer to find that gentleman in possession of the others.

One of these was Pym's by right; the remainder were a humourous gift from the agent who was accustomed to sift the correspondence of his clients. Pym had chuckled over them, and written a reply that he flattered himself would stump the boy; then he had unexpectedly come into funds (he found a forgotten check while searching his old pockets for tobacco-crumbs), and in that glory T. Sandys escaped his memory. Result, that they were now face to face.

A tiny red spot, not noticeable before, now appeared in Tommy's eyes. It was never there except when he was determined to have his way. Pym, my friend, yes, and everyone of you who is destined to challenge Tommy, 'ware that red light!

"Well, which am I?" demanded Pym, almost amused, Tommy was so obviously in a struggle with the problem.

The saucer and the blank pages told nothing. "Whichever you are," the boy answered heavily, "it's not herding nor

foddering cattle, and so long as it's not that, I'll put my heart in it, and where the heart is, there the treasure—"

He suddenly remembered that his host must be acquainted with the sentiment.

Easy-going Pym laughed, then said irritably, "Of what use could a mere boy be to me?"

"Then it's not the page-boy!" exclaimed Tommy, thankfully.

"Perhaps I am 'Scholastic,'" suggested Pym.

"No," said Tommy, after a long study of his face.

Pym followed this reasoning, and said touchily, "Many a schoolmaster has a red face."

"Not that kind of redness," explained Tommy, without delicacy.

"I am 'H and H,'" said Pym.

"You forget you wrote to me as one person," replied Tommy. "So I did. That was because I am the chemist; and I must ask you, Thomas, for your certificate."

Tommy believed him this time, and Pym triumphantly poured himself a glass of whisky, spilling some of it on his dressing-gown.

"Not you," said Tommy, quickly; "a chemist has a steady hand."

"Confound you!" cried Pym, "what sort of a boy is this?"

"If you had been the draper you would have wiped the drink off your gown," continued Tommy, thoughtfully, "and if you had been 'Glasgow Man' you would have sucked it off, and if you had been the charitable society you wouldn't swear in company." He flung out his hand. "I'll tell you who you are," he said sternly, "you're 'Anon.'"

Under this broadside Pym succumbed. He sat down feebly. "Right," he said, with a humourous groan, "and I shall tell you who you are. I am afraid you are my amanuensis!"

Tommy immediately whistled, a louder and more glorious note than before.

"Don't be so cocky," cried Pym, in sudden rebellion. "You are only my amanuensis if you can tell me what that is. If you can't—out you go!"

He had him at last! Not he!

"An amanuensis," said Tommy, calmly, "is one who writes to dictation. Am I to bring in my box? It's at the door."

This made Pym sit down again. "You didn't know what an amanuensis was when you answered my advertisement," he said.

"As soon as I got to London," Tommy answered, "I went into a bookseller's shop, pretending I wanted to buy a dictionary, and I looked the word up."

"Bring in your box," Pym said, with a groan.

But it was now Tommy's turn to hesitate. "Have you noticed," he asked awkwardly, "that I sometimes whistle?"

"Don't tell me," said Pym, "that you have a dog out there."

"It's not a dog," Tommy replied cautiously.

Pym had resumed his seat at the table and was once more toying with his pen. "Open the door," he commanded, "and let me see what you have brought with you."

Tommy obeyed gingerly, and then Pym gaped, for what the open door revealed to him was a tiny roped box with a girl of twelve sitting on it. She was dressed in some dull-coloured wincey, and looked cold and patient and lonely, and as she saw the big man staring at her she struggled in alarm to her feet, and could scarce stand on them. Tommy was looking apprehensively from her to Pym.

"Good God, boy!" roared Pym, "are you married?"

"No," cried Tommy, in agony, "she's my sister, and we're orphans, and did you think I could have the heart to leave Elspeth behind?" He took her stoutly by the hand.

"And he never will marry," said little Elspeth, almost fiercely; "will you, Tommy?"

"Never!" said Tommy, patting her and glaring at Pym.

But Pym would not have it. "Married!" he shouted. "Magnificent!" And he dipped exultantly, for he had got his idea at last. Forgetting even that he had an amanuensis, he wrote on and on and on.

"He smells o' drink," Elspeth whispered.

"All the better," replied Tommy, cheerily. "Make yourself at home, Elspeth; he's the kind I can manage. Was there ever a kind I couldna manage?" he whispered, top-heavy with conceit.

"There was Grizel," Elspeth said, rather thoughtlessly; and then Tommy frowned.

Chapter II

THE SEARCH FOR THE TREASURE

Six years afterwards Tommy was a famous man, as I hope you do not need to be told; but you may be wondering how it came about. The whole question, in Pym's words, resolves itself into how the solemn little devil got to know so much about women. It made the world marvel when they learned his age, but no one was quite so staggered as Pym, who had seen him daily for all those years, and been damning him for his indifference to the sex during the greater part of them.

It began while he was still no more than an amanuensis, sitting with his feet in the waste-paper basket, Pym dictating from the sofa, and swearing when the words would not come unless he was perpendicular. Among the duties of this amanuensis was to remember the name of the heroine, her appearance, and other personal details; for Pym constantly forgot them in the night, and he had to go searching back through his pages for them, cursing her so horribly that Tommy signed to Elspeth to retire to her tiny bedroom at the top of the house. He was always most careful of Elspeth, and with the first pound he earned he insured his life, leaving all to her, but told her nothing about it, lest she should think it meant his early death. As she grew older he also got good dull books for her from a library, and gave her a piano on the hire system, and taught her many things about life, very carefully selected from his own discoveries.

Elspeth out of the way, he could give Pym all the information wanted. "Her name is Felicity," he would say at the right moment; "she has curly brown hair in which the sun strays, and a blushing neck, and her eyes are like blue lakes."

"Height!" roared Pym. "Have I mentioned it?"

"No; but she is about five feet six."

"How the —— could you know that?"

"You tell Percy's height in his stocking-soles, and when she reached to his mouth and kissed him she had to stand on her tiptoes so to do."

Tommy said this in a most businesslike tone, but could not help smacking his lips. He smacked them again when he had to write: "Have no fear, little woman; I am by your side." Or, "What a sweet child you are!"

Pym had probably fallen into the way of making the Percys revel in such epithets because he could not remember the girl's name; but this delicious use of the diminutive, as addressed to full-grown ladies, went to Tommy's head. His solemn face kept his secret, but he had some narrow escapes; as once, when saying good-night to Elspeth, he kissed her on mouth, eyes, nose, and ears, and said: "Shall I tuck you in, little woman?" He came to himself with a start.

"I forgot," he said hurriedly, and got out of the room without telling her what he had forgotten.

Pym's publishers knew their man, and their arrangement with him was that he was paid on completion of the tale. But always before he reached the middle he struck for what they called his honorarium; and this troubled them, for the tale was appearing week by week as it was written. If they were obdurate, he suddenly concluded his story in such words as these:

"Several years have passed since these events took place, and the scene changes to a lovely garden by the bank of old

Father Thames. A young man sits by the soft-flowing stream, and he is calm as the scene itself; for the storm has passed away, and Percy (for it is no other) has found an anchorage. As he sits musing over the past, Felicity steals out by the French window and puts her soft arms around his neck. 'My little wife!' he murmurs. *The End—unless you pay up by messenger.*"

This last line, which was not meant for the world (but little would Pym have cared though it had been printed), usually brought his employers to their knees; and then, as Tommy advanced in experience, came the pickings—for Pym, with money in his pockets, had important engagements round the corner, and risked intrusting his amanuensis with the writing of the next instalment, "all except the bang at the end."

Smaller people, in Tommy's state of mind, would have hurried straight to the love-passages; but he saw the danger, and forced his Pegasus away from them. "Do your day's toil first," he may be conceived saying to that animal, "and at evenfall I shall let you out to browse." So, with this reward in front, he devoted many pages to the dreary adventures of pretentious males, and even found a certain pleasure in keeping the lady waiting. But as soon as he reached her he lost his head again.

"Oh, you beauty! oh, you small pet!" he said to himself, with solemn transport.

As the artist in him was stirred, great problems presented themselves; for instance, in certain circumstances was "darling" or "little one" the better phrase? "Darling" in solitary grandeur is more pregnant of meaning than "little one," but "little" has a flavour of the patronizing which "darling" perhaps lacks. He wasted many sheets over such questions; but they were in his pocket when Pym or Elspeth

opened the door. It is wonderful how much you can conceal between the touch on the handle and the opening of the door, if your heart is in it.

Despite this fine practice, however, he was the shyest of mankind in the presence of women, and this shyness grew upon him with the years. Was it because he never tried to uncork himself? Oh, no! It was about this time that he, one day, put his arm round Clara, the servant—not passionately, but with deliberation, as if he were making an experiment with machinery. He then listened, as if to hear Clara ticking. He wrote an admirable love-letter—warm, dignified, sincere—to nobody in particular, and carried it about in his pocket in readiness. But in love-making, as in the other arts, those do it best who cannot tell how it is done; and he was always stricken with a palsy when about to present that letter. It seemed that he was only able to speak to ladies when they were not there. Well, if he could not speak, he thought the more; he thought so profoundly that in time the heroines of Pym ceased to thrill him.

This was because he had found out that they were not flesh and blood. But he did not delight in his discovery: it horrified him; for what he wanted was the old thrill. To make them human so that they could be his little friends again—nothing less was called for. This meant slaughter here and there of the great Pym's brain-work, and Tommy tried to keep his hands off; but his heart was in it. In Pym's pages the ladies were the most virtuous and proper of their sex (though dreadfully persecuted), but he merely told you so at the beginning, and now and again afterwards to fill up, and then allowed them to act with what may be called rashness, so that the story did not really suffer. Before Tommy was nineteen he changed all that. Out went this because she would not have done it, and that because she could not have done it. Fathers might now have taken a lesson from T. Sandys in the upbringing of their daughters.

He even sternly struck out the diminutives. With a pen in his hand and woman in his head, he had such noble thoughts that his tears of exaltation damped the pages as he wrote, and the ladies must have been astounded as well as proud to see what they were turning into.

That was Tommy with a pen in his hand and a handkerchief hard by; but it was another Tommy who, when the finest bursts were over, sat back in his chair and mused. The lady was consistent now, and he would think about her, and think and think, until concentration, which is a pair of blazing eyes, seemed to draw her out of the pages to his side, and then he and she sported in a way forbidden in the tale. While he sat there with eyes riveted, he had her to dinner at a restaurant, and took her up the river, and called her "little woman"; and when she held up her mouth he said tantalizingly that she must wait until he had finished his cigar. This queer delight enjoyed, back he popped her into the story, where she was again the vehicle for such glorious sentiments that Elspeth, to whom he read the best of them, feared he was becoming too good to live.

In the meantime the great penny public were slowly growing restive, and at last the two little round men called on Pym to complain that he was falling off; and Pym turned them out of doors, and then sat down heroically to do what he had not done for two decades—to read his latest work.

"Elspeth, go upstairs to your room," whispered Tommy, and then he folded his arms proudly. He should have been in a tremble, but latterly he had often felt that he must burst if he did not soon read some of his bits to Pym, more especially the passages about the hereafter; also the opening of Chapter Seventeen.

At first Pym's only comment was, "It is the same old drivel as before; what more can they want?"

But presently he looked up, puzzled. "Is this chapter yours or mine?" he demanded.

"It is about half and half," said Tommy.

"Is mine the first half? Where does yours begin?" "That is not exactly what I mean," explained Tommy, in a glow, but backing a little; "you wrote that chapter first, and then I—I —"

"You rewrote it!" roared Pym. "You dared to meddle with—" He was speechless with fury.

"I tried to keep my hand off," Tommy said, with dignity, "but the thing had to be done, and they are human now."

"Human! who wants them to be human? The fiends seize you, boy! you have even been tinkering with my heroine's personal appearance; what is this you have been doing to her nose?"

"I turned it up slightly, that's all," said Tommy.

"I like them down," roared Pym.

"I prefer them up," said Tommy, stiffly.

"Where," cried Pym, turning over the leaves in a panic, "where is the scene in the burning house?"

"It's out," Tommy explained, "but there is a chapter in its place about—it's mostly about the beauty of the soul being everything, and mere physical beauty nothing. Oh, Mr. Pym, sit down and let me read it to you."

But Pym read it, and a great deal more, for himself. No wonder he stormed, for the impossible had been made not only consistent, but unreadable. The plot was lost for chapters. The characters no longer did anything, and then went and did something else: you were told instead how they did it. You were not allowed to make up your own mind about them: you had to listen to the mind of T. Sandys; he described and he analyzed; the road he had tried to clear through the thicket was impassable for chips.

"A few more weeks of this," said Pym, "and we should all three be turned out into the streets."

Tommy went to bed in an agony of mortification, but presently to his side came Pym.

"Where did you copy this from?" he asked. "'It is when we are thinking of those we love that our noblest thoughts come to us, and the more worthy they are of our love the nobler the thought; hence it is that no one has done the greatest work who did not love God.'"

"I copied it from nowhere," replied Tommy, fiercely; "it's my own."

"Well, it has nothing to do with the story, and so is only a blot on it, and I have no doubt the thing has been said much better before. Still, I suppose it is true."

"It's true," said Tommy; "and yet—"

"Go on. I want to know all about it."

"And yet," Tommy said, puzzled, "I've known noble thoughts come to me when I was listening to a brass band."