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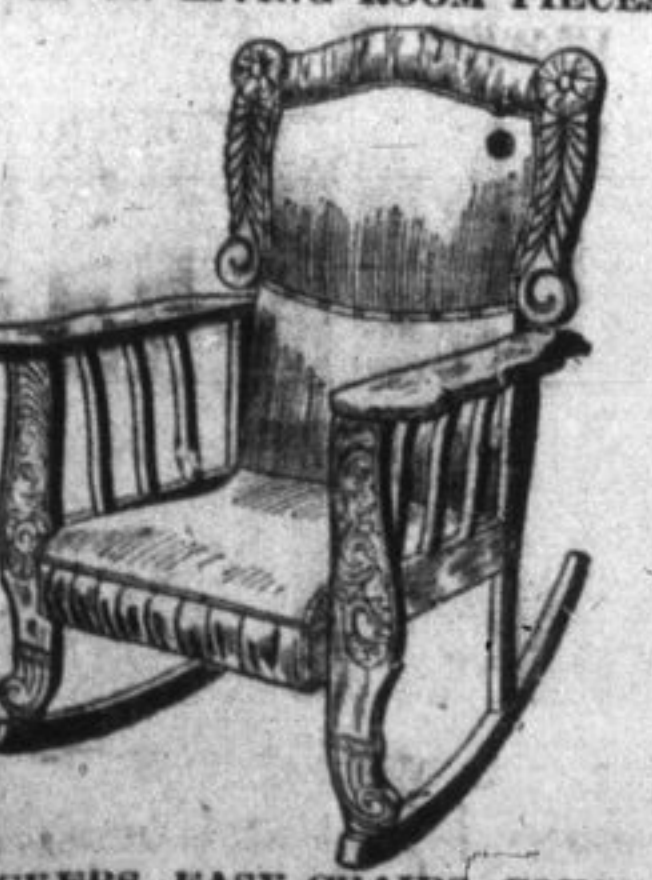
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# THE FOURTH ESTATE

Novelized by  
**FREDERICK R. TOOMBS**  
From the Great Play of the Same Name by Joseph Medill Patterson and Harriet Ford.  
Copyright, 1909, by Joseph Medill Patterson and Harriet Ford.

"Hello! Tell Mr. Dupuy I'm busy!" he cried after taking the message. "What? Send him in. That's all, Down. See that they take care of Dillon, will you?"

The night editor nodded in the affirmative and gazed rather curiously at Brand as he went out.

Dupuy came into Brand's office with a most circumstantial and deferential air. Dressed in evening clothes, carrying his silk hat in his hand and with a boutonniere of hothouse violets in his lapel, he gave every indication of being the society figure that his name and wealth had made possible for him.

The lawyer lobbyist walked directly to the desk at which Brand was seated. In reply to the managing editor's salutation he bowed stiffly and leaned forward over the desk.

Several moments elapsed before Dupuy spoke. He was trying to put his opening words in the most judicious language, and well he might hesitate when one considers the nature of his errand.

"The gentleman who was coming to see you tonight, at last he said carefully, 'has had to go to the opera with his daughter. He has asked me to come in his stead.'"

An expression of complete bewilderment spread over the other's face.

"A gentleman? What gentleman?" he interrogated.

Dupuy was momentarily nonplussed.

"Why, the gentleman who—ah, with whom you made an appointment for 9 o'clock this evening—here—at your office."

Brand still refused to show his hand. "I should be very glad to hear what you have to say, Mr. Dupuy, but, frankly, I don't know what you are driving at."

The visitor was annoyed. He was positive that Bartelmy would not send him on a wild goose errand. Surely the judge and Brand had come to terms regarding the silence of the Advance as to the Lansing Iron case decision. The editor was playing with him now, he knew—dangling him on a verbal hook to tantalize him.

"Oh, come, you know who I mean—Bartelmy!" snapped the judge's despotic tone.

"Judge Bartelmy?" exclaimed Brand in surprise. "Well, what about him?"

Dupuy produced a card, which the editor glanced at.

"What's this?" he asked. Then he read: "Dupuy will represent me. In what?"

He started to put the card in his pocket.

"Perhaps you would better let me have that so I can return it to him." Dupuy reached eagerly for the card, which Brand slowly extended to him. "This refers to that transaction of which you and he were speaking this afternoon," continued the lawyer.

Brand laughed loudly.

"Well, Dupuy, I'm a poor hand at guessing riddles. I give it up. What's the answer?"

The lawyer became impatient.

"The transaction involving the—ah—the investment of a certain sum of money," he explained haltingly.

"A business deal I was going into with the judge?" in amazement.

"Precisely."

"If I had any business with the judge, Dupuy, I would prefer to do it with the judge."

"But I am his plenipotentiary."

"Mhm, mhm!" grunted Brand negatively.

"You are rather unreasonable, Brand. A wealthy and hopeless look began to show in the lawyer's visage. The young editor noted this and resolved to temporize with and exasperate this man whom he despised above all others, even above Bartelmy himself. Bartelmy, believed Brand, even if he was a scoundrel, actually had superior mental ability, was a brilliant thinker and acted boldly in many of his dishonest transactions on the bench. But Dupuy—he was to Brand the hanger-on, the skulker, the vandal jacket that devoured corpses in the night that braver animals had fought and killed by day. His eyes blinked in the light, did Dupuy's. It was in the underground runways that he coursed the swiftest. And as these thoughts sped through his brain the editor looked away absently.

Dupuy came hot on his trail.

"Shall I make an appointment with him for you, say, tomorrow morning?" he anxiously queried of the newspaper man.

"I don't care."

"Then I'll do it!" he said decidedly and moved away from the desk. "And—er—" He saw that Brand was still indifferent. He returned to the desk. "Things will remain stationary until then!" he asked.

"Things never remain stationary in a newspaper office," responded the managing editor laconically.

"What I mean is that there would be no story—er—about him—until you see him."

"How would you like to be a reporter?" you something to think about, and you can show him as much in a night as he'd learn in a month alone. Mr. Dillon, allow me to present you to Mr. Sylvester Nolan. Mr. Dillon broke me into the business," said the editor to the newspaper owner's son.

Sylvester drew a ponderous wad of bills from his pocket and offered the top one to the old "down and outer."

"You want to handle my friend Powell with gloves," advised Sylvester. "He's just full of temperament."

what you are talking about."

"Can we let it go over for one day?"

"I don't know what you are talking about."

"You insist on his coming here personally?"

"Of course I don't. I don't insist on anything."

"How much time have we got?"

"He knows all about that."

Dupuy was immeasurably relieved at this last remark. It was the first time that Brand had indicated that Bartelmy and he had had an engagement.

"Mr. Brand, I can almost assure you that my client will keep his appointment." The lawyer's voice rang out firmly.

The editor nodded carelessly toward the speaker, who spun on his heel and speedily strode away. The telephone bell sounded. Brand bent over quickly.

"Hello! Who—oh, yes, Mr. Nolan. No, sir, not yet, but I think we'll have him landed all right in about half an hour. Please don't worry about it. It'll be all right. Just go away and hide somewhere, for they'll be doing the baby act as quick as I trap him, and you'll be squeezed to death before we get to press. You promised me this chance. You want to know what's going on? Well, where will you be? Triple 3 Plaza. Get off the wire, Miss Stowe. Yes, Mr. Nolan, they cut in on us. I'll call you up later."

**CHAPTER X**

**B**RAND hung up the telephone receiver with an anxious expression on his face. "Nolan must keep away from this," he muttered tensely. "Let him take a train or go to sleep or bury himself if he wants to. If Bartelmy or Dupuy gets hold of him after I've shown my hand, there'll be the merry d—l to pay, and if they find him they might succeed in coaxing—I wonder if Nolan still sticks; I wonder if Nolan still sticks; he kept repeating over and over to himself. The noise of voices raised in indignation broke in upon him from the outer hall at his right. "Oh, that's a chestnut," some one cried; "he's always out, always when I come."

The editor glanced around and saw Sylvester Nolan leading in his friend Powell, the poet.

"You're not out, are you, old man?" asked young Nolan of Brand. "Who's that fly duck that tried to keep me from coming in?"

"I'm sorry, Nolan; I'm very busy tonight, and you'll have to excuse me. I'm very busy."

"Brandy, old boy, I came in on business. Want to get a job for my friend Powell here. He's a poet." He dragged the was eyed rhymer up to Brand's desk.

The editor looked Powell over.

"We don't carry poets on the pay-rolls," he grunted.

"But just look at this one. I know, let Mr. Brand see your ode to the opening of the Omaha exposition. He went in the competition with this."

Powell handed the poem to Brand.

"And I see he came out with it," snorted the newspaper man.

"Yes, sir," agreed Powell faintly.

"People haven't time for poetry," commented Brand.

"That's what I've been trying to tell Powell," put in Sylvester. "He was born after his time."

"How would you like to be a reporter?" asked the editor.

Powell's eyes gleamed with a sickly color that showed that he was enthralled.

"A reporter? Oh, yes, sir!" he said. Brand took down the phone.

"Hello! Give me night city editor, please. Hello! That you? I've got a cub here named Powell. Please give him a week's trial. Report to city editor."

"Where is he, sir?" asked Powell, bewildered.

"You're reporter now. Find out."

"Yes, sir." He started toward the hall door.

"Over here, Powell!" cried Sylvester, leading him in the opposite direction.

Joe Dillon now added to the managing editor's troubles by again coming into the office.

"Thank you, Mr. Brand," he began. "Could you spare me a little car fare?"

Brand tossed him a quarter. "Never mind now," he said. "Say, Joe, go out with that cub tonight. It will give

him a little more practice."

"That all may be," responded Brand, rising to end the conversation, "but the Advance doesn't issue passes to the stage entrance."

Sylvester's jaw fell in his astonishment at this unexpected blow, and after a moment, after vainly endeavoring to find appropriate words for a reply, he went out of the room.

Brand was impatient because of the precious time that had been wasted. He had work to do and little time in which to do it, and it was the most important work he had ever done in his life.

He sent the office boy to bring the two reporters, Howard and Jeff. Speaking to Miss Stowe, the "central" of the Advance's private telephone system, he said: "Do not put anybody else on this wire until you hear from me, no matter how long it takes. Understand? Connect this phone with editorial room 4 and have it connected until I tell you. Now be sure about this. Understand? Again he repeated, as it concerned the success of his entire scheme, "Don't break the connection until I tell you myself."

The two reporters came in.

"Now, boys, understand what I want you to do. You've got to take word for word, a conversation I'm going to have here. Go in room 4. You, Jeff, take the receiver."

"Yes, sir."

"And you, Howard, take the extension. Thus you will each hear what is said. Keep it glued to your best ear and take down every word you hear tonight between Judge Bartelmy and me. The judge will sit in the chair at the right of my desk. I will be in my own chair. The telephone will thus be midway between us. Whatever words he and I say will be said almost directly over the mouthpiece of the phone. Now, you see what I am going to do."

Brand took a lead pencil from his pocket and began a proceeding which the two reporters, accustomed as they were in their business to ingenious strategy, failed at first to understand. Then the scheme dawned on them. Brand took the telephone receiver from the hook, and the metal arm immediately snapped upward, establishing the connection. Then he inserted the point of the lead pencil in the small aperture under the little metal arm or hook and deliberately broke it off. The tiny wedge thus held up the hook. Brand now hung up the receiver, and the pencil point prevented the weight of the receiver from bearing the hook down and breaking the connection. The connection was made continuous without the slightest indication that such was the case. Every word now spoken within a reasonable distance of the mouthpiece would be conveyed to the telephone and the extension telephone in editorial room 4, where Howard and Jeff were to be stationed. They had stenographers' pads with them, so which they were each to take down the conversation in shorthand.

"This phone will be open all the time that Bartelmy is here," announced Brand. "Go in there, Howard, and see if you can hear Jeff and me talking. Sit over here, Jeff." He pointed to the chair at his right. Howard went out.

"Now, Jeff, take down this and take down what you say to me," continued the editor.

Brand turned to Jeff and began to talk in a natural tone of voice.

"Jeff, you know I think the dog in the moon was seven times too slow in his journey through the paths of men, having lost 6,749,739,274,480 pounds in

his auto northward. Is that your opinion?"

"No, not entirely. Hence and hereafter we complain of such a miraculous egotism of generality and solemnism of peaceful garments and cold thought."

Brand struck a blow on the desk.

"On the contrary, it was unquestionable and with nasty justice, miscalled

his auto northward. Is that your opinion?"

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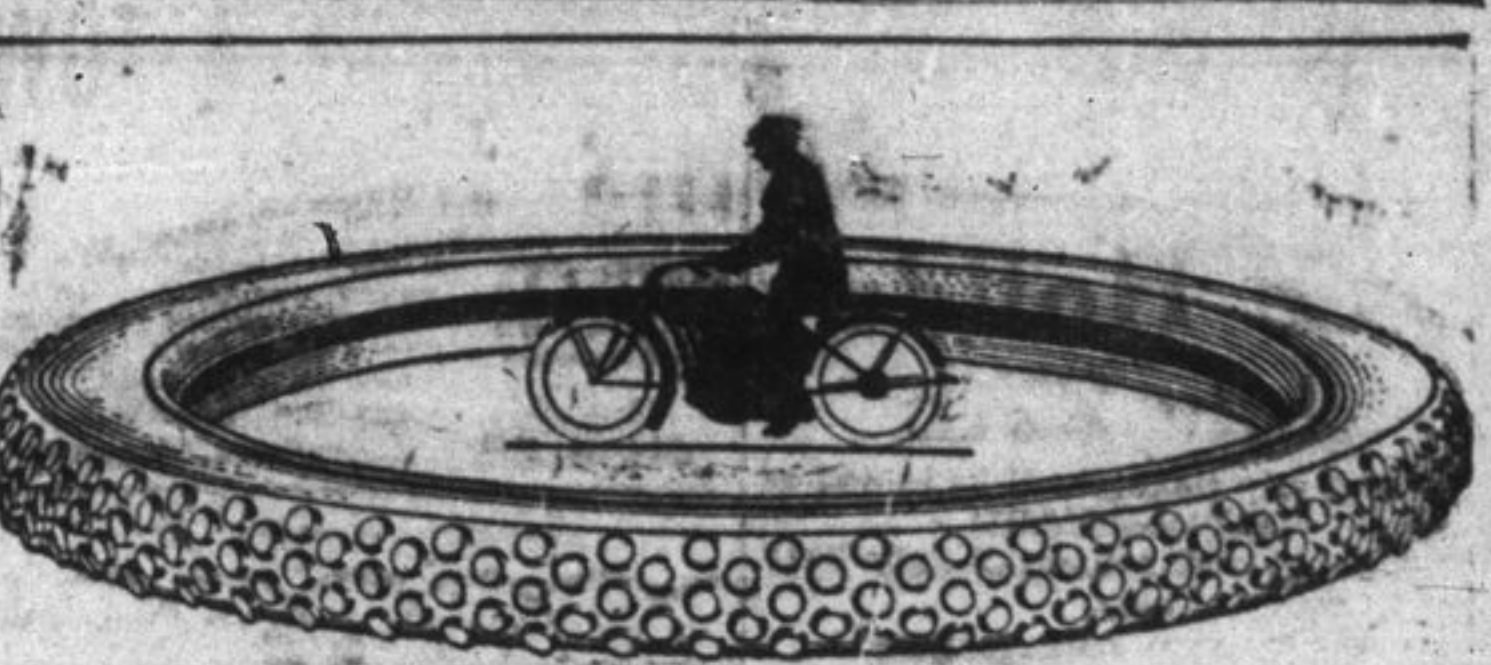
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