

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott  
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel  
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen  
Weber Freiligrath Frey  
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel  
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas  
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach  
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil  
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London  
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer  
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup  
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff  
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt  
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier  
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder  
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer George  
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke Bebel Proust  
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot  
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy  
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius  
Chamberlain Langbein Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates  
Brentano Claudius Schiller Bellamy Schilling Kralik Raabe Gibbon Tschchow  
Katharina II. von Rußland Gerstäcker Raabe Gleim Vulpius  
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Morgenstern Goedicke  
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Kleist  
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Mörike Musil  
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus  
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus  
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo Moltke  
Nestroy Marie de France  
Nietzsche Nansen Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht  
Marx Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntatz  
von Ossietzky May vom Stein Lawrence Irving  
Petalozzi Platon Pückler Michelangelo Knigge Kock Kafka  
Sachs Poe Liebermann Kock Korolenko  
de Sade Praetorius Mistral Zetkin



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# **Two Boys and a Fortune, or, the Tyler Will**

Matthew White

# Imprint

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series.

Author: Matthew White

Cover design: toepferschumann, Berlin (Germany)

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg (Germany)

ISBN: 978-3-8491-7132-2

[www.tredition.com](http://www.tredition.com)

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## PREFACE

Among all my books, this one will always occupy a particularly warm spot in my heart; for listen, reader, and I will let you into a little secret. Riddle Creek is really Ridley, and is a true-enough stream, flowing through one of the most charming regions in Delaware County, Pennsylvania. The railroad trestle which plays such an important part in the first chapter forms a picturesque feature of the landscape, in full view of a home where I was wont to spend many a joyous holiday-time and which I had in mind whenever I mentioned the Pellery.

Again, the odd little house on Seventh Street, Philadelphia, described in Chapter XXVII, actually existed until pulled down some years since to make room for a big manufacturing plant. I used to visit there every time I went to the Quaker City, and all the furnishings mentioned stand out vividly in my recollection to this day, even to the guitar off in one corner. I never played Fish Pond there, but I have eaten some of the best dinners I ever tasted in that famous kitchen below stairs, which had to serve for dining room as well. That kitchen and the great cat, who used to sun himself in the shop window, loom large in my memories of boyhood.

Matthew White, Jr.

*New York City.*

*Jan. 5, 1907.*



## CHAPTER I

### THE MAN ON THE BRIDGE

"Look there! I believe that man is actually going to try to cross the trestle."

Roy Pell pulled his sister Eva quickly toward him as he spoke, so that she could look up between the trees to the Burdock side of the railway bridge almost directly above their heads.

"Why, it's Mr. Tyler!" exclaimed Jess, who had a better view from where she sat on the log that spanned Riddle Creek. "Oh, Roy, something's sure to happen to him! He's awfully feeble."

"And there's a train almost due," added Eva. "What can he be thinking of to attempt such a thing?"

"Oh!" and Jess gave a shrill scream. "He's fallen!"

Roy said never a word. He quickly passed his fishing-line to Eva, ran nimbly across the tree trunk to the Burdock side of the creek, and then started to climb the steep bank. The girls sat there and watched him breathlessly, now and then darting a look higher up at the spot on the trestle where the figure that had dropped still lay across the ties, as if too badly hurt to rise.

The two Pell girls and their twin brothers, Rex and Roy, had gone down to sit on the log in search of coolness on this blazing hot July afternoon. Rex had been giving vent to his disgust because he wasn't able to accept the invitation to join a jolly party of friends for a trip to Lake George and down the St. Lawrence. Cause why? Lack of funds.

"You ought to have known you couldn't go when Scott asked you, Rex," Roy had told him. "You would need at least fifty dollars for the outing. And that sum will clothe you for almost a year. And clothes with you, Rex, ought to be of sufficient importance to be considered."

"I suppose I might as well go and tell Scott about it and have it over with," Rex had replied, creasing his handsome forehead into a frown. "I dare say he'll be calling me 'Can't Have It Pell' pretty soon. It was only two months ago I asked for a bicycle and didn't get it, and there was the new pair of skates I wanted last winter."

"Don't be late for tea," Eva called out after him as he made his way to the shore.

She kept her eyes on the trim figure till it was hidden by the trees which grew thick along the road that led up to town.

"Well, if anybody in this world ought to have money it is that good looking brother of ours," remarked Jess with a sigh. "He'd appreciate it so thoroughly. I don't wonder he's crabbed this afternoon. Just think of the chance for a good time he's had to let slip just for lack of a little money."

"Fifty dollars isn't a little money, Jess," returned Roy, casting his line.

"I know it isn't to us, but it is to most of the people we know, Scott Bowman for instance. Do you suppose we shall *ever* be rich, Roy?"

"We are rich now; at least you and Eva are, in my opinion."

"We rich?" Eva nearly slipped from her position on the log at the statement.

"Why, yes; haven't you both contented dispositions, and isn't that worth a small fortune?"

"But why have you left yourself out, Roy?" Eva wanted to know. "Surely you who never grumble, are satisfied with things."

"No, I'm not." A flash came into the boy's eyes that made him really handsome for the moment. "I'm chafing inwardly all the while at having to be idle this way when it seems there ought to be so much I could do to help along."

"But you are getting ready to do it as soon as you finish school," rejoined his sister. "And you must have a vacation, you know. Besides, think how much you do to help Sydney."

"Oh, I only do a little copying for him now and then."

He was going to add more, but at this point he caught that glimpse of the man on the trestle which brought about the interruption in the talk already described.

Roy soon emerged from the line of shade in his climb up the embankment and the scorching afternoon sun beat down on him mercilessly. But he did not cease his exertions to reach the top as quickly as possible. He knew that a train for the city would be along very soon now; he remembered the curve just beyond the bridge; the engineer could not see whether there was an obstruction in the way, until he should be too close on it to stop.

Then he thought of Mr. Tyler, and of how nobody liked him, with all his money, which he hoarded like a miser. He was probably crossing the bridge now to take the train for the city from Marley, and save the additional five cents he might have to pay if he boarded it at Burdock, which was much nearer his home.

But he was human, he was an old man; he was helpless now, doubtless overcome by the heat. And there was nobody about but Roy to prevent what might be a tragedy.

On he toiled. The loose dirt slid out from under his feet and rattled down the hillside behind him. The perspiration poured from his face in streams. What a contrast this was, he thought, to sitting there over the creek placidly fishing!

He had gained the top now and, scarcely pausing to take a long breath, he ran out over the ties till he reached Mr. Tyler's prostrate form. He had fallen fortunately not very far from the beginning of the trestle, but he was quite unconscious and could not help himself. Roy must carry him away from his dangerous position.

He bent to his task, which was not such an arduous one as might be supposed. Mr. Tyler was little more than a bag of bones, weighing not as much as did Roy himself. The latter picked him up as carefully as he could, not daring to look down lest he should grow dizzy. Then he began to bear his burden back to *terra firma*.

He had almost reached the ground when the old man stirred and opened his eyes. He started to struggle, but Roy looked down at him and spoke sternly.

"Keep quiet, Mr. Tyler," he said, "or you will have us both over the trestle."

The miser shuddered, but he made no reply and kept perfectly still till Roy placed him on the grass in the shade of a horse chestnut tree. The boy threw himself down beside him, and began to fan himself with his straw hat. The next minute, with a shrill whistle, the train rushed by them.

"You saved my life, Roy Pell," said Mr. Tyler after the skurrying dust raised from the ballast had settled into place. "You are a brave boy."

Roy made no reply. He was still very hot and he was thinking that his whole adventure was very much like a scene in a book.

"I ought to say 'Oh, it is nothing,' I suppose," he reflected with a half smile. "But then that wouldn't be the truth. From the way I feel now it was a good deal."

"I've missed that train, I suppose," Mr. Tyler went on.

At this Roy wanted to laugh. It sounded so ridiculous. And yet it was quite characteristic of this singular old man. But young Pell mopped his face vigorously with his handkerchief to hide his mirth and then said, rising to his feet:

"Do you feel all right, Mr. Tyler?"

"Oh, I guess so," was the reply, and the old man started to get up too.

But he immediately fell back again and a frightened look came into his face.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **IN THE MISER'S HOME**

"Have you hurt yourself, Mr. Tyler?" asked Roy anxiously. "You didn't break a limb when you fell, did you?"

"No, no, it is here," and the old man put his hand up to his head.

"The sun was too hot for you," went on Roy. "You haven't got over it yet."

"I am afraid I shall never get over it, Roy Pell." The miser looked at him in a steady way that would have frightened some boys. "And I don't want to die yet, not till I have made my will. I must have a lawyer. Where is Sydney Pell, that brother of yours."

"He isn't my brother. He's a boy that father adopted when he was very young, but he's better than a good many brothers. And he's a good lawyer, too. Would you like to see him. He'll be back on the five-thirty train."

"Yes, I should like to see him if it won't be too late. What time is it now? You haven't got a watch, have you? Look at mine and tell me."

"Quarter past five, and now you ought to be taken home right away, and have a doctor."

"You think I am very bad then?" Again the frightened look came into the old man's face.

"No, of course not. Lots of people have to call the doctor when they're not going to die."

"Don't speak of dying. I'm afraid to die. See, I don't mind telling you so. And I ought to be. I haven't done very much good in the world. There isn't anybody I can think of will be sorry to have me go. That isn't the way to live, Roy Pell. You ought to be happy, so happy, because you are young, and have your life before you to make it the way it should be made."

"You have life before you, too, Mr. Tyler. You are not so very old. You're not much more than seventy."

"I'm seventy-two. But come, let me see if I can get up with your help. I want you to take me home, so you can go for Sydney. He's a good boy, you say, one I can trust?" The old man looked in Roy's face closely as the latter bent over him.

"Sydney is the best fellow that ever lived," replied Roy soberly. "He's been a staff to my mother ever since father died, and has almost taken his place to us children."

"Yes, yes. I've heard that what your father did for him years ago was like bread cast upon the waters that's coming back after many days. Let me see, how old are you?"

"Fifteen. I tell you what, Mr. Tyler. The girls are down under the bridge. Wait a minute till I call down to them to send Syd over as soon as he comes. Then I'll go home with you and needn't leave you."

"All right. You're very good to me, Roy Pell." The miser sank back on the grass, while Roy hurried to the edge of the bluff and making a trumpet of his hands, called down:

"Eva! Jess!"

"Yes, are you all right, Roy?" came back the answer in Eva's tones.

"All O. K., but Mr. Tyler's a little done up. I'm going home with him. And he wants you to send Syd over as soon as he gets back. It's some business matter, quite important, and we may both be late for tea. Don't wait. Do you understand?"

"Yes, all right. We'll go to meet Syd now. Shall we send the doctor, too?"

Roy thought a minute.

"Yes. I think you'd better," he called down.

"I told them to send the doctor to your house," he reported to Mr. Tyler. He half expected the latter to raise a protest, but he didn't.

"All right," he said feebly. "He'll do for one of the witnesses. Now."

Roy bent down so that the old man might lean on his shoulder. He put one arm about his back to steady him, and thus supported he was able to move slowly along the cinder path beside the track.

"What did you attempt to walk across the trestle for, Mr. Tyler?" asked Roy.

"I made up my mind suddenly to go to town," was the answer. "There wasn't time to go around by the turnpike. I thought I could get across before the train came. I've seen boys go over it."

"But you're not a boy," rejoined Roy, with a smile.

"No. I'm not a boy," and Roy could feel a shudder pass through the arm that was resting on his shoulder.

Mr. Tyler lived in a house not far from the Burdock station. An old woman did the cooking for him and went home at night. For the rest he dwelt almost like a hermit, and so far as any one knew he had not a relative in the world. But the report had gone out as it always does in such cases, that he was very rich, and now his desire to see a lawyer and make a will convinced Roy that for once rumor must be right.

"I wonder how much he's got and to whom he'll leave it?" he asked himself, but now they were within sight of the little house and the old man leaned so heavily upon him, that all his attention was centered on getting him safely to the end of their journey.

By the time this was accomplished Mr. Tyler was so completely exhausted that he dropped down on the first chair they reached.

"After you are rested a bit," said Roy, "I'll help you to get to bed."

"No, no," protested the old man; "so many people die in their beds. Go and tell Ann to get a little more for dinner to-night. You and Sydney must stay and eat it with me. It will take quite a time to have my will drawn up. You'll find her in the kitchen."

The woman was not much surprised when Roy told her of the condition in which her master had come home.

"It's what I've been expecting every day," she said. "He doesn't eat enough to keep a bird alive. I'm amazed to think he should ask you to stop to dinner. It's little enough you'll get, Master Roy, but I'll do my best."

The house was a bare looking place, furnished only with the merest necessities. No pictures were on the walls, no books on the tables; Roy wondered what the old man did to pass the time here by himself. There was not even a sofa for him to lie upon. He asked about this when he returned to the front room.

"Then you'd better come in and lie on the outside of your bed if you won't get in it," he suggested.

To this the older man acceded and allowed Roy to assist him to the adjoining apartment where he slept.

"No," he murmured, "I haven't wasted much on myself, you see. That will leave still more for those who come after me. What would you do with \$500,000 if you had it, Roy Pell?"

The question came so suddenly and in such contrasted tones to the mumble in which the miser had heretofore been speaking that for the moment Roy was too startled to make reply.

"No, I'm not raving, Roy Pell," went on the old man. "There's a possibility—" he checked himself quickly—"what would you do with all that money if you had it?"

"I'd give it to my mother," answered Roy.

"Good boy, of course. I didn't think of that. You're a minor, and you're not selfish. You'd rather she would have it, eh, than that it should be held by her in trust for you? But if you got it, you'd promise to see that it was spent, and not hoarded as I have hoarded mine? You'd promise that wouldn't you?"

Roy by this time began to think that the partial sunstroke had completely unhinged Mr. Tyler's brain, already a little out of plumb.

"Oh, yes," he laughed. "There's no danger of our hoarding money. There are too many things to spend it on for that."

"Then you're squeezed a little down at your place, eh?"

"Oh, we can get along," returned Roy hastily; "but we can't do much branching out. My mother has only the income from father's insurance, and then there's the place which we own, with the taxes to pay."

The old man now relapsed into silence. He seemed to be thinking, deeply. Suddenly he started up and exclaimed:

"It must be nearly time for Sydney to be here. Won't you go outside and watch for him?"

Roy was very glad to leave the miser. He realized that perhaps it was wrong for him to feel that way, but then, believing him to be a little unbalanced, it was but natural that he should be sensible of some constraint in his presence.

"I wonder if he has got \$500,000 put away somewhere?" he asked himself when he reached the little portico. "He talked exactly as if

he was going to give it to me. I suppose for what I did for him on the bridge. That would be just like a story episode, so much like one that there's no chance of its coming true. But what would Rex say if it did? Ah, here comes Syd."

Roy left the porch and hurried out to the gate to meet the fellow who had been nearer and dearer to him than a brother as far back as he could remember.

"Poor old chap," he said as they met and he turned around, slipping his arm within that of the tall young lawyer, "it was a shame to make you walk all that distance in the hot sun when you must be tired out from your day in town. But there's a job at the end of the walk."

"And a cheerful brother, too," added the other. "Poor Rex! I saw him over at the station. He takes it terribly to heart that he cannot go off with the Bowmans. I wish I were rich, if only for you boys' sakes. But what's this heroic deed I hear of your doing for old Mr. Tyler? Positively, Roy, I'm proud of you."

"Oh, the train didn't come along for a good five minutes after I'd got him off the trestle. You see that takes a good deal of the 'heroic rescue' business out of the thing. But come on inside. He's been quite anxious to see you. I've made him lie down, for I think he's in a very bad way."

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **MR. TYLER'S WILL**

"Is that you, Sydney Pell?" called out Mr. Tyler as soon as he heard footsteps in the hallway.

"Yes, Mr. Tyler, What can I do for you?" and Sydney followed Roy into the bedroom.

"You can make my will," replied the old man promptly. "That doesn't mean that I am going to die right away," he added hastily, "but I've had a warning. Why, I may have time to make two or three wills before I give up the ship."

He laughed hoarsely and started to get up. But he was weaker than he supposed, and fell back on the bed with a little gasp just as he had done out by the trestle.

"Don't exert yourself too much, Mr. Tyler," said Sydney. "I can fix the thing up for you while you are lying right here. I think I saw a bottle of ink and some paper in the other room. Roy can help me bring in that table that stands there, and then I can take down whatever you wish and you can sign it. But you will want witnesses."

"There's Ann, she can be one," responded the old man.

"And I told the girls to send a doctor up here. He can be another," put in Roy. Then he added, when all was arranged: "I suppose I had better go out."

"Yes, you can go out and watch for the doctor," said Sydney. "Now then," he went on, turning to Mr. Tyler when they were alone, and after he had written out the regulation formal preamble, "I am ready."

The miser said nothing in reply for a minute or two. He kept interlocking his wasted fingers with one another, glancing now and then out of the window, where he could see Roy pacing back and forth in front of the cottage. Finally he murmured so low that Sydney was obliged to bend forward to catch the words:

"Would you be surprised to hear that I had a vast amount of money in the deposit companies in Philadelphia?"

"No, Mr. Tyler," replied Sydney. "It has always been supposed that you were a man of wealth."

"I am, I am," muttered the miser. "I have something like half a million. And yet what good has it done me? I have hoarded it just for the sake of hoarding. It began to come to me when I was quite young. I was surprised. Some property was wanted by the city. They paid me well for it. I invested what I got and doubled it, I kept on making money till I loved it for itself alone and could not bear to part with it even on the chance of making more. So I left it all to draw interest except what little it takes to support me in the poor way in which I live."

He paused and Sydney adjudged it proper to inquire.

"Then you have no relatives, no one dependent on you?"

"I have outlived them all," was the reply. "There was a boy, though, who was once in my employ and whom I came to think a good deal of. But he grew up and went into stocks and tried to bear the market against me. I never forgave Maurice Darley for that. And yet I loved him once. I brought him up, out of the gutter, as it were, and there was a time when he loved me. There is another brother in your family whom I see sometimes and who reminds me of him."

"Reginald — Rex, as we call him — you mean?"

"Yes, but perhaps he would not have done for me what Roy did this afternoon. You have heard of it. He risked his life for mine. He will make a good man. I am sure of it. And he is unselfish. To make him happy you must make others happy around him. Yes, I will do it. Quick, write down that I leave all my fortune unreservedly, to — what is his full name?"

"Whose full name?" Sydney had dropped his pen and sat staring at Mr. Tyler as if in a daze.

"Why your brother — Roy Pell's."

"Royal Fillmore Pell," Sydney repeated the name mechanically, still too amazed at the inference he must draw from the question to be really conscious of what he was saying.

"Thank you. A fine name it is, and fitted to a splendid boy. Then write — but no. I had determined not to leave it to him. What is his mother's name? She must have it all outright. Then it can be used at once in the way to please Roy best. Now Mrs. Pell's full name?"

"Jessica Fillmore Pell. I suppose, as a lawyer, I ought not to express any surprise at what you are doing, but you can see how close home it comes to me, Mr. Tyler. You know the relation in which I stand to this family, with whom I am connected by no ties of blood, but who have been so good to me."

"And you have deserved it, young man. I am not leaving money to a family of whom I know nothing. Have you got that: all my fortune unreservedly to Jessica Fillmore Pell?"

"Yes, Mr. Tyler."

"Roy knows something of this, and if people think it strange or hint that I am out of my head to leave my money in this way, you can tell them what he did for me this afternoon. That ought to satisfy them. Now I want to tell you where my money is invested so that you can get at it easily, for I want you, Sydney, to be one of my executors, and I will take Dr. Martin for the other. Here he comes now. We will continue this business presently."

Roy came in with the doctor; a cheery man, whom everybody in the neighborhood liked.

"Doctor," began Mr. Tyler, before the physician could say anything, "I want you to witness my will. Roy, run out to the kitchen and get Ann to come in here."

"Ann," said Roy, appearing in the rear regions, "Mr. Tyler wants you to come out and witness his will."

"Is the poor man dying then?" exclaimed the woman, looking frightened.

"Oh, no, he only —"

"Never mind bothering Ann about that now," said the doctor presenting himself at this moment Roy returned to the bedroom with the physician, where he found that Mr. Tyler had decided he would have Sydney for a witness in place of Ann.

"I'd rather have a man," he explained. "I forgot that he could do it just as well as not."

Then the instrument was duly signed and witnessed.

"I am perfectly sane, you can declare, can't you, Dr. Martin?" asked the miser when the thing was done. "I don't want any mistake to be made about it."

"You need have no fear on that score,"

"Dinner's ready, Mr. Tyler," announced Ann, making her appearance at this point.

"All right, you boys go out and eat it," said the old man. "The doctor wants to see me I suppose. Ann can bring me a little broth in here afterwards. And about signing that, Sydney, I want to add a clause leaving something to Ann. I forgot about her."

Silently the two Pells went out into the dining room, and in almost silence they ate the broth which the housekeeper placed before them. Then when she had gone out Sydney said:

"You know how much Mr. Tyler is worth, Roy, do you?"

"He told me something like \$500,000. I didn't know whether to believe it or not That's a great sum of money, Sydney. I feel awfully queer about the whole thing. Does it seem all right to you that he should leave it all to mother just because of the little thing I did for him this afternoon? I don't want to seem to feel that she oughtn't to have it. But the whole thing seems so odd."

"Not nearly so queer as a great many wills that are made every day," rejoined Sydney. "But don't worry over it, Roy," he added with a laugh. "You look as if you had been convicted of some crime. Remember you haven't got the money yet, and may not have it for a great many years to come."

"It isn't my money, Syd. It's to be left to mother."

"Well, if it hadn't been for you she wouldn't have it. But by the way, you had better get home as soon as you can. I think mother is inclined to worry about you from what Jess said. I can stay with the old man as long as it is necessary."

"And I shan't say anything about that will, Syd. I'd rather you wouldn't either, just yet."

"No, it is best to keep it as quiet as we can. It seems strange that the old man should have talked so freely about it as he did."

The meal was soon finished, and the two starting to enter the bedroom, met the doctor in the doorway.

"He's in a bad way," he whispered to Sydney. "I shall come back again this evening. Come, Roy, are you going down? I'll take you along with me in the carriage."

"Yes, you'd better go, Roy," urged Sydney. "You look worn out. Tell mother I'll stay here as long as I'm wanted."

"Good-by, Mr. Tyler," said Roy, stepping into the bedroom and extending his hand to the old man.

"Good-by, Roy Pell. You have made me think better of my kind to-day. In fact I think you have made a changed man of me. Would you— would you mind coming up to see me to-morrow?"

"No, of course I wouldn't mind. I'll come. I hope you'll be better in the morning. Good-night," and Roy went off with the doctor.

"Well, Roy," said the latter, as they drove away, "you are to be congratulated. You have brought your family into a nice little inheritance if all our miserly old friend says is true."

"Perhaps it isn't," returned Roy, "so please don't congratulate me or say anything about it just yet."

Roy was so tired when he got home that he did not give very spirited answers to the questions his family showered upon him. He went to bed very shortly and was asleep before Rex came to take his place beside him.

All in the household were locked in slumber when Sydney let himself in with his key about eleven. He did not retire. He went into the library, got out some law books, and sitting down at the table, appeared as if about to do some work. But he did not pick up the pen. He sat there, his head sunk on his chest, with a look of misery on his face that was pitiable to see.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE TWIN BROTHERS

The Pells breakfasted early so that Sydney might catch the 7:30 express for the city. On the morning following the events narrated in the preceding chapter the entire family were gathered at the table with the exception of Rex, who was invariably late, and Sydney himself.

"It's very strange," remarked Mrs. Pell "He is always on time. He can barely catch his train now. I wish you, Roy, would run up to his room and see what is the matter. He may be ill."