

'Anything that's honest where I can learn something.'  
'Yes. How would you like the drug business?'  
'Pretty well, I guess.'  
'There's a friend of mine wants a straight boy of about your age. He told me so yesterday. Said he'd rather have a boy from the country.'  
'That's me,' said the boy. 'Everybody seems to know I'm from the country.'  
'Country boys are in demand,' said the stranger.  
'Glad to hear that,' laughed the boy. 'I guess I ain't going to starve. Still, I'm afraid the supply keeps pretty well up to the demand.'  
'Good boys never have any trouble getting work,' said the man. 'Better go right down now and see my friend. He's at the corner of Bayard and Twenty-first streets. You'll find him there now. I'm afraid the place will be gone if you don't hustle after it.'  
The lad looked around.  
'You're very kind,' he said, 'to take such an interest in me.'  
'I like your looks.'  
'Thank you. It's funny you knew I was from the country.'  
'Well, there's a difference in your appearance, you know.'  
'I suppose there is. There must be. That big bank officer out there, he recognised me, too. He used to be a detective.'  
Did he?  
'Yes. He says that pays better.'  
'Of course he knows.'  
'And it's easier.'  
The man squirmed nervously.  
'Don't you want to try for that place in the drug store?'  
'I ain't quite sure. Hours long?'  
'I don't know how long they are. You'll find out when you go for the place.'  
'Yes. Have to draw soda water?'  
'Perhaps so.'  
'Man was killed in our town by a soda water fountain blowing up.'  
The man looked at his watch. It was a gold watch and a handsome one. The boy caught sight of it over the man's shoulder. He also saw that the hand that held it trembled.  
'You've got just about time to get there before my friend goes for lunch.'  
The boy yawned.  
'I guess I wouldn't care for the drug business,' he said.  
The man said something hastily under his breath.  
'I might poison somebody,' said the boy. 'There was a clerk in the drug store at our place who gave a woman paris green for her complexion. The doctor said if she'd taken it inside it would have killed her. I'd hate to have a thing like that on my conscience. I don't believe I'd sleep well after it.'  
The man looked around at the boy. He was staring up at the ceiling with an innocent air, his hands deep in his pockets and his head thrown back.  
'Guess you don't want to work,' said the man.  
'Yes, I do. That is, I want to make money. I ain't so anxious about the work.'  
The man tapped his foot impatiently on the polished floor.  
'Do you expect a job here?'  
'I don't really expect anything. You see, I'm greener than I look. Everybody knows I am from the country. You know it, and that there detective out there knew it. Of course, Mr. Barrington will know it, because I'm taking a letter of introduction to him. You see, he's a friend of Banker Symington in our town. It isn't any such bank as this. Not by a good deal. But it's sound and it's safe, and Banker Symington knows his business as well as any man in his line can know it. And he knows Banker Symington, too. When he heard I was coming up here he gave me a letter of introduction, and I guess he has said a good word for me. We are well acquainted. I was in the bank with him for a year or more. We two were the whole thing.' The boy laughed.  
'It was a good deal different from this sort of a place.' Then he looked around at the stranger. 'So you see this is pretty nearly the only business I know anything about—and I don't know anything too much about this. At the same time, I wouldn't object to a nice job most anywhere. The drug business is a good one, and of course I might do worse.' He lazily rolled his eyes toward the stranger. 'Where did you say your friend's drug store is?'  
The man quickly looked up.  
'It's the corner of Hazen and Twenty-fifth,' he glibly said. 'You can easily find it.'

'Yes,' drawled the boy. 'I guess I'll go down there if I don't get a chance to see Mr. Barrington pretty soon.'  
The man scowled in an ugly way, but it was lost on the boy, who continued to stare at the ceiling. And then both lapsed into silence. But the eyes of the boy were alert for all his apparent absorptions in the rich frescoes. He saw that the man was nervous and anxious, and he wondered why.  
Presently he yawned and drew himself up.  
'I'll be asleep here in a moment,' he said, 'if I don't stir around a little. My foot's asleep now.' He arose as he spoke and struck his heel sharply to the floor. 'If Mr. Barrington comes out I'll be right back. I'm just going to walk around a little and start my circulation.'  
He walked toward the door slowly, the man watching him intently. Then he turned and came back. His eyes, apparently intent upon the fine decorations, were busy all about him. The tall officer was near the outer door, but the boy took good care not to attract his attention.  
Presently the officer moved toward the bank counter and leaned against it. It was the chance the boy hoped for. From his position the officer could not be seen by the man on the bench, and the boy knew this. He sidled across to the counter and stared through the heavy plate glass window as if fascinated by the work and the workers within. Almost within arm's length, just around the angle, stood the tall officer.  
'Officer,' said the boy in a hoarse whisper, 'don't look around.'  
The officer had started at this abrupt order, but he heeded it.  
'I hear you,' he softly said; 'what's up?'  
'I'm the country boy you spoke to awhile ago.'  
'Yes, I recognise your voice. What's wrong?'  
'I don't know yet. I'm going to find out if I can. There's a fellow sitting on that waiting bench by the gate whose looks I don't like. There's something wrong about him.'  
'Let me have another look at him.'  
'No, no. You'll scare him off the track. I'm going to stay right with him and see his little game through.'  
'But this is my job,' protested the officer in a low whisper.  
'It isn't any job at all yet,' said the boy. 'You'll get in all right when it is.'  
'But what makes you think he's up to mischief?'  
'He's nervous and excited. He wants to get rid of me. He tried to send me out to look for a job, and he got the addresses mixed up. Besides, I know who he is. I was with a circus two seasons, and he was a hanger-on. He was a confidence man, a capper, a cheap gambler, and finally he was mixed up in a hold-up scrape and disappeared. I knew him the instant I got a good look at him.'  
'Say,' murmured the officer, 'you are not as green as you look.'  
'Perhaps I couldn't be,' the boy softly chuckled. 'Anyway, I'm on to this fellow all right—I'm not going to leave him until I find out what he's up to. Keep out of sight until I call you. What's your name?'  
'Macy. You yell Macy if you want me. But, say, I don't half like this. Ain't I trusting too much to you?'  
'Guess not,' said the boy. 'There's nothing against the fellow as yet. It will be a good deal more to the credit of both of us if we nab him in some nefarious act. But don't you show yourself in any way that will excite his suspicions. Hang around the outside door and keep your ears both open. There, I've talked enough. I'm going back to the bench.'  
He gave one long lingering look at the little stacks of gold on the marble slab beyond the plate glass, and then lounged back to the bench by the gate. The man there, who had been staring hard at him, frowned as he approached.  
'You like money, don't you?' he said.  
'Guess I do,' laughed the boy. 'Specially gold. There ain't as pretty a metal as the yellow stuff. And, gee whiz! what a heap of it they've got inside there! I was counting a lot of those stacks, and there's more'n 2000 in one of 'em.'  
'Maybe you'd like to earn a little money,' said the man.  
'Of course I would,' said the boy. 'That's what I'm here for.'  
'Well, here's your chance,' said the man. 'I've forgotten a valuable paper that I need in some business here to-day, and I wish you'd go after it.'  
'Where?'  
'Here's the address.' He scribbled a line on a scrap of envelope. 'It will only take you twenty minutes or so. I'd go myself, but I can't leave here.'  
The boy looked at the address.  
'This ain't the drug store, is it?' he drawled.  
'No, but it's just around the corner.'