DOWN THE RIVER PP.1-169

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Down the River pp.1-169 by Roscoe W. Brink

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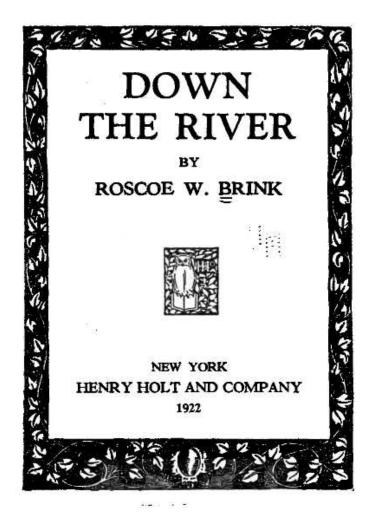
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JUST SO YOU'LL KNOW

Perhaps you don't think these things, I'm writing about, Really Happened To me; But I tell you they did, every last one of them. . . . I had dreams Of what was going to be When I left the country, A girl, For the City, Down the River; I was glad to get away, Away to the noise of voices; Away to the clatter of crowds Making you feel it was an old round dance You was in; Away to the singing, whispering, murmuring Of many lights; Away to where so many neighbors were You never, never could be lonely; Away to where people would see me

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JUST SO YOU'LL KNOW

And know me and call me; Away to where-Oh, the wonderful city that men and women Were building: Themselves strong, themselves big, Themselves not bending like my father To the mercy of wind and rain And sun and cold, Like a lonely man on an empty hilltop-No-no-not like that so lonely-But close, close to people, Laughing and singing and talking and dancing, And doing, Like they was all off on a picnic Together; Doing things They wanted to do. . . . Well, it was some picnic I found Down to the City, Down the River: And here it is. . . .



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GOING

"We got to be going, Belle." From far off to me His voice seems to come: It's Len's and we've just been married. Out of the mixture of voices in the room, Sounding like they had no people behind them, Len's words pick at me again: "Boat leaves at six o'clock, Belle; It don't wait for nobody." I say good-by to the minister and his wife. Pah and Mah with the old horse Are waiting for us outside; Pah, he's looking at his horse's ears, And Mah, she ain't saying nothing either-Only smoothing down her silken mit, Up; and down; up; and down The back of her hand. "Well, here we are again," says Len. "Holl-up!" says Pah to his horse, Sharp and gratingly, So it makes me jerk and look at him Like I had just come out of a dream.