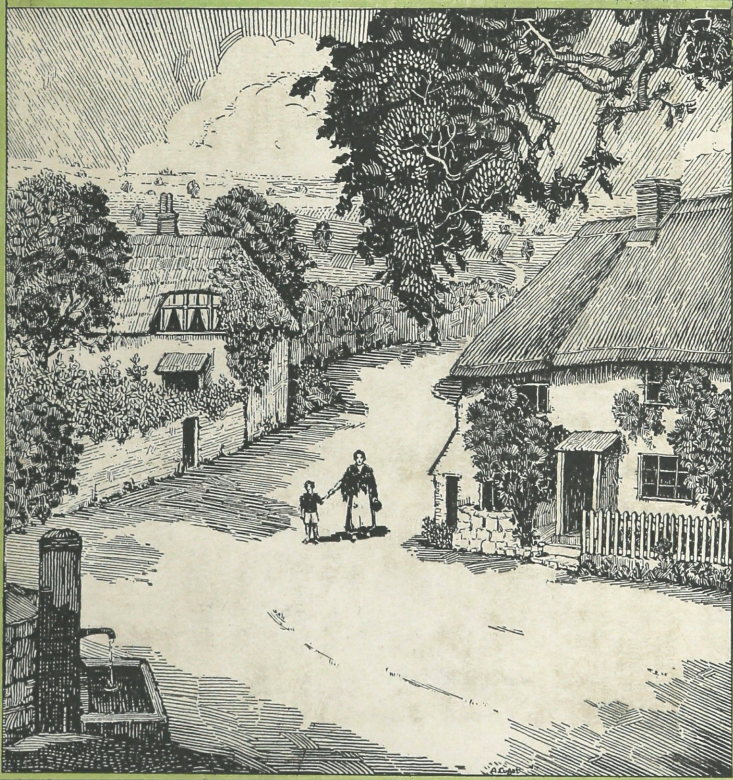


A WOMAN OF THE SHEE

by DONN BYRNE



\$2.00

A WOMAN OF THE SHEE

And Other Stories

By

DONN BYRNE

Author of "Messer Marco Polo," etc.

In this volume is collected almost the last of Donn Byrne's fiction which has not heretofore been published under book-covers. It was planned several years before his death. He saw it as a volume to be published in some off-year when for one reason or another he might not have a novel ready. Then came his sudden cutting-off in the prime of his literary career, and since then his great public has been calling for everything of his available for publication. This volume of short stories is among the last answers his publishers can give to that demand. And no doubt his great following will make the most of it.

Donn Byrne was a superb story-teller, a master of the grand organ notes of romance, perhaps the preëminent master in English in the field of the first quarter-century. In this volume are some of the most popular stories he wrote.

Among the twelve stories included here are, in addition to the title story: "Sargasso Sea"; "O, Snowy-Breasted Pearl"; "Triangle"; "The Wife of the Red-Haired Man," and "Beulah Land."

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A WOMAN OF THE SHEE
AND OTHER STORIES

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DONN BYRNE

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DESTINY BAY
CRUSADE
IRELAND, THE ROCK WHENCE I WAS HEWN
FOOLISH MATRONS

A WOMAN
OF THE SHEE

And Other Stories

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DONN BYRNE



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New York

London

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REVEIL

Behold! This world I made with many an elf,
With gnomes and little people of the hills,
With shadow kings and dukes and margravines,
With men-at-arms, with knights in panoply;
And all within my little empery—
My costly tournaments; my gallant scenes;
My hills of yellow furze; my little rills
That tinkled like a mass-bell; and my hives
Of honey-bees; my owls that hoot o' night;
My cardinals, my bishops, and my priests,
My bannerets, my bugles, and my drums,
All of these fade, and, mark you, I myself
Am fading, like the moon when morning
comes . . .

DONN BYRNE

“Smart Set,” New York, 1915.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I A WOMAN OF THE SHEE	3
II "O SNOWY-BREASTED PEARL"	27
III TRIANGLE	54
IV THE HONORABLE OF THE EARTH	83
V A BREVITY ON PAGE THREE	121
VI MRS. ALEXANDER TYSON: TOWARD A MEMOIR	139
VII A MARRIAGE HAS BEEN ARRANGED	162
VIII SARGASSO SEA	177
IX AN INFRINGEMENT OF THE DECALOGUE	231
X WHAT BECAME OF MARGOT GILHOLME	256
XI BEULAH LAND	270
XII THE WIFE OF THE RED-HAIRED MAN	293

A WOMAN OF THE SHEE

I

A WOMAN OF THE SHEE

FOR a quarter of an hour—for an hour, it seemed to the fox-hunting rector—the old noblewoman with the Norman face and the white hair had been standing motionless by the sun-dial. Rigid as a statue she appeared, her mouth compressed, her head high, her eyes half closed. Only the quick, tumultuous heaving of her bosom gave evidence of life. Round her the rose garden bloomed like the setting of a child's romance. Great butterflies winged their ways about, and from the hives down the pathway came the busy clamor of the bees. From southward the wind was bringing the scent of the orchards, and on the right the river swept past like a band of silver. Slieve Gullion rose, sheer and blue, westward, with the eagles above its crest microscopic, like small insects. She saw nothing of it. She seemed to be in a state of coma.

“Ay! We all come to it some day!” Kilbane, the ruddy, burly, gray-haired rector, said in his grating North-of-Ireland speech. He knew that this woman needed no religious platitude to help her, and he could find nothing else to say. “Ay! Lady Fitzjohn, it's the one thing we can't avoid!”

He reached over and took the cablegram from her fingers. He read over the large typed letters of the New York despatch for the third time. “Bertrand died of pneumonia on Tuesday,” it said. “Was

buried to-day. Condolences." So it ran brutally; followed the signature of the family lawyer's correspondent. That was all.

She turned toward the rector for an instant and the look of pain in her proud eyes made him wince.

"My son's dead, old friend," she said. "I've seen father and mother and husband die, and I knew all was well with them. I could bear it all if I only knew—"

"If you only knew what?" Kilbane shot at her in his gruff Scots manner.

"If I only knew he had died in honor—in no disgrace."

"Disgrace! What disgrace?" the rector blustered. "The lad was a bit wild, but there was not an ounce of harm in him. For the dear's sake—"

She looked at him steadily again, and for an instant he wilted, but he blustered again:

"Not an ounce. No! Not an ounce! You'll hear all about it. There'll be a letter following. You're all nerves, Lady Kate. It's all imagination."

"I haven't heard *her*." The old woman's voice dropped to a whisper and her pale face became paler still. It became a queer, clay-like gray. A scared look came into her eyes. Her fingers worked nervously about the gnomon edge of the dial. "She hasn't cried yet."

She said the last words in a frightened hoarseness. The rector's ruddy color ebbed a trifle.

"Indeed and upon my word I'm ashamed of you!" he told her. "Upon my word I am! To believe in an old wife's tale like that! It's overwrought you are. I'll have Doctor Knight come up—"

"She keened for his father and she keened for his grandfather. You know it."

"I know nothing about it," Kilbane argued man-

fully, but his face was still pale. "I know nothing about it and I don't believe it. It's sheer nonsense!"

She turned away with a little, pathetic smile on her mouth and shook her head wistfully. For a moment the garden had seemed motionless and soundless. The great ilex trees had ceased their soughing, and the faint thunder of the pigeons and the droning of the bees had ceased. Life about them seemed to have stopped in its course for an instant as at some potent formula of magic.

"Down by the river she keened. With my own ears I heard her and with my own eyes I saw her. I saw her both times!"

"Imagination!" the rector stoutly contended. "It was all imagination. You were overwrought, as you are now!"

She laid her hand on his sleeve lightly.

"Old friend, it was good of you to come," she said. "But leave me to myself now. Go! Go, I beg of you. Go!"

He looked at her searchingly for a moment, and turned and walked down the graveled path. He stopped and wheeled about.

"I wish I could say something to you," he blurted out finally. "I wish to God I could!"

He mounted his cob that the stable-boy was holding for him and rode slowly down the drive, the reins slack on its neck. At the lodge gate he shook his head.

"She'll never hear the banshee cry for Bertrand," he muttered to himself. "She'll never cry for him. A bad lot he was. God forgive me for speaking ill of the dead! There was no good in him!"

II

You will not read much in history of these Fitzjohns of the Fewes, for history has too much to do to deal with kings and queens, with the movements of battles and with politics, with fates of kingdoms and with changes of dynasty, to spare time for knights banneret. In the records of the Heralds' College you may read of their coming to Ulster with Strongbow's men and of their remaining there, on the lands they conquered from the Irish tribes. The records will tell you of the clean, unbroken descent of them from Fulke Fitzjohn, of the Norman foray, to Michael, of the name to-day.

In some of the old Celtic histories you will find more about them. Your Celtic historian has little liking for dates but a great appreciation of personality. "A gallant strain," they admit; "a great pity they came among the English." There are choice stories of their chivalry; the tale, for instance, of Sir Bohun Fitzjohn, who, beleaguering Antrim, gave orders that the garrison should be allowed provisions, "deeming it a shame to starve pretty fighters." There is the story of another Fulke of the line, who dived into the water at the Yellow Ford to rescue an opponent. And lastly there is the story of Giles Fitzjohn, who was known as the Good, and O'Donnell's daughter.

The Book of the Three Scribes is wordy as to this exploit, flowery, imaginative. Pruning it generously one learns that one Malcolm Campbell, Cromwellian governor of Dundalk, had taken to him to wife, without bell, book, or candle, the daughter of O'Donnell Roe of the Hills, a princess in her own right, as the ancient dynasties of Ulster went. He had seized her in a raid on the O'Donnell country, in which her

father and her five brothers had been killed. Northward from Louth the tale stole. The flying Irish gnashed their teeth in impotent rage. The newer Scots planters shrugged their shoulders and called the man a dog. The Normans glowered and their fingers itched at their belts. But none of them moved except Giles Fitzjohn. He gathered his people together.

"Come!" he told them from the saddle. "We go to Dundalk."

With an infinity of detail, with rhetoric, and with figure of speech the three scribes narrate the entry into the Louth city, the pinning of Malcolm Campbell to the wall by a long Norman blade, as an entomologist fixes a butterfly in its case; the bringing of O'Donnell's daughter to the Fews; and the death of her from shame and grief and madness within ten days.

"And it is said," the three pious monks go on, "that at the death of any member of the Fitzjohns of the Fews who has upheld the chivalry of the name, which is a great chivalry, as may be seen . . . the shade of O'Donnell's daughter appears and keens for them, crying out in the night-time; though this we are not prepared to believe, it being against doctrine, as the Abbot Geoffrey of Clonmacnoise says . . ."

No matter what the three pious scribes of Oriel believed, the legend was dogma to the country-side of the Fews. In that great pit of country ranged about by mountains, bordered by the sea, for all their religion some are more than half-way pagans still. Church doctrine may be church doctrine, but deep in their hearts they know that by moonlight in the silver woods the little people of the hills play their bagpipes; and that behind the yellow gorse on

the mountains the leprechauns hammer the fairy shoes, and collect their wages for their crocks of gold. They believe that once a year the Naked Hangman strides across the mountaintops, gibbet under arm, summoning evil men to untimely ends. They believe in the Black Dog, who pads along the roadside with a gust of cold wind. They hear the rumble of the Phantom Coach. A small matter, then, for them to be certain of the banshee who mourns that a Fitzjohn, a clean and gallant gentleman, is no more.

“Ah, sure; what’s the use of denying it?” the country-side answers you wearily. “Time and time again she has been seen; and the cry coming out of her mouth that would make the hot heart within cold, as if dead fingers were on it.”

And not only did the country-side believe it, but somehow there was a feeling among the Fitzjohns that it was true. They spoke of it proudly as they spoke of the armor and the bannerols they had of dead knights of their line, as of the Saracen’s sword which Gaston Fitzjohn had brought from the Crusades. True, they bantered a little about it, and smiled as they told the story. But, nevertheless, there was a feeling there—a half pride, a half fear.

She was getting old now, was Lady Katherine. She could be an old woman when none was near to see her proud head held high and her eyes snap with their former vigor. And as she went in from the garden to the great house which had grown up about the foundations of the ancient Norman stronghold, she was walking not through sunshine and June flowers and the busy toil of bees but through a gray shadow-land of old fancies and new fears. Twice she thought she had seen this thing. It might have been a mist from the river and the far-off cry of a rabbit

that a weasel had trapped, when her father-in-law died; or it might have been a pillar-like formation in the snow-storm and the howling of the wind among the trees, on the night they laid away Sir Ulick, her husband, his neck broken on the hunting field. These things she might concede at any other time than now.

"Bertrand! Bertrand! My boy! How was it?" she sobbed to herself gently.

Her son could be dead, and she could stand that, meeting the blow unflinchingly as a gentlewoman should, mourning to herself but bending to the decree. But there was something in her stronger than affection even. It was the sense of pride and chivalry. A great name she bore and a great name had been her own before she married. And somehow she felt that death itself was an incident. It was the spirit and circumstance of it that mattered. She wanted her men-folk to go before their last tribunal with clean hands and in a clean way, like gentlemen. But Bertrand! If anything were wrong they would not tell her. And the only thing there was for her to know by was this figment of old legend, this winter night's tale by a country fire.

"If I only knew!" she moaned. "If only I could be sure!"

III

After a line of noble and chivalrous gentlemen Bertrand Fitzjohn came—came suddenly, dramatically, as a violent thunder-storm may follow clear June weather. They welcomed him, christened him, sent him to school, taught him by precept and example the noble ideals of the house; but even at fifteen they noticed something was wrong.

"There's something too cunning, too sophisticated in his eye," Kilbane, who was tutoring him during the summer, would muse. "He seems a stranger among his kind, like a cat among a pack of fox-hounds."

Then came the first instance, in his second year at Trinity. There must have been a thousand minor things before that, but none had told of them and the family had not noticed it. One might as well look for signs of petty thieving in a bishop. He was suspected of being the agent of a ring of book-makers in their attempt to have a horse pulled at the Curragh races. They could never get the entry of old Lord Boyne's stables, but Fitzjohn could. The matter leaked out. Old Sir Ulick Fitzjohn, as square a sportsman as ever topped a six-foot ditch, was furious, then disgusted, then coldly horrified.

"What's this? What's this, Bertrand? Do you know what they're saying?"

"About the Boyne horse?" Bertrand answered easily. "It's a lie."

For an instant the old baronet's heart leaped with joy, but an instant later it dropped again—lower than before. He knew intuitively, and sensed from his son's manner, from the lack of fury in it, that the report was true. He left without a word.

The report was savagely beaten down. There was no evidence to prove it—no concrete evidence. And, after all, it was ridiculous on the face of it that a Fitzjohn of the Fewes should do such a thing.

Followed the second instance, of which there was no doubt in the minds of a group of men, though they kept it strictly among themselves. The occasion was a soccer match between Wales and Trinity. Fitzjohn lounged in the Trinity goal, his great length, his long arms, his cat-like quickness making

him the best amateur goal-keeper in Ireland. The score stood three goals to three and two minutes to go. Fitzjohn seemed uneasy between his posts, moved about nervously as a leopard. Suddenly the Welsh forwards got the ball and raced down the field in a last desperate effort to send in a deciding shot. Evans, the red-headed center, had sneaked through the half-backs, fooled the full-backs, and was within eight yards of the goal. The spectators were shouting with a sound as of crashing surf on a lee shore. McNamara, the giant Trinity full, launched himself on the little Welshman like a rock from an arbalest.

"Shoot, man, shoot!" the Welsh team were screaming. For an instant Evans shuffled in his run and balanced himself. The leather left his toe low and swift, like a teed golf-ball.

Fitzjohn could have stopped that ball—could have stopped it easily. He caught it deftly between his arms and bent chest, fumbled with it, dropped it. It trickled into the net. The referee's whistle cut the air like a whip. A gasp of horror and consternation went up from the spectators. Wales had won.

They condoled with him in Dublin on his ill luck until a drunken book-maker in a Sackville Street saloon told how Fitzjohn had bet heavily against his own team.

A few days later Burke-Keogh, captain of the team, and McNamara, the giant full-back, called on Fitzjohn in his rooms. Burke-Keogh was white, McNamara was purple with rage.

"If you're not out of this in twenty-four hours," Burke-Keogh said, "(stand back, McNamara, and keep your hands clean) if you're not out of here, your name will be a byword and a scandal throughout Ireland."

Whatever explanation he gave old Sir Ulick of his

leaving Trinity is not on record. It is a fact, though, that the story came to the old baronet's ears. He said no word to Bertrand. Dazed and stricken, he spoke to Fowler, the family solicitor.

"God bless my soul, Sir Ulick!" the red-faced old solicitor said, his eyes peering about his beribboned glasses; "God bless my soul, but you know little of the world! When you were a young man yourself you were interested in a little racing and a little cards and a bottle of port. But you were different. You were hail-fellow-well-met. Your son is different. He is high and mighty, contemptuous of every one. 'You be damned! Who are you?' And naturally he made enemies. There's where these reports come from. Unfortunate, very unfortunate. But ridiculous, utterly so. God bless my soul, utterly so!"

"It may be so," Sir Ulick thought it over. "Yes, it may so be."

It might so have been, but it wasn't. At a shooting party of Ross of Bladensburg's, two miles from home, card play grew high. At two in the morning the colonel's English guests were losing with remarkable steadiness; and with a steadiness that was equally remarkable Bertrand was winning their banknotes and gold. A look of uneasiness came into the colonel's grizzled face. He watched Fitzjohn from the corner of his eye. Suspicion changed into certainty. He became cold and furious. He threw his cards on the table and stood up. He looked straight at Bertrand.

"I don't think I care to play any more," he said.

The other men followed his eyes and his meaning. They, too, looked at Bertrand, but with white, shocked faces. Bertrand rose to his full lean height. A quiet, sardonic smile played about the aquiline Norman features.

"I don't think I care to play any more, either," he drawled with splendid effrontery. He swept his winnings into his pocket and looked at the faces about him. "It's getting rather chilly to-night, so I think I'll be going. Good night, gentlemen. . . . John, my hat and coat; and will you have the dog-cart brought round to the door?"

By next morning Ross of Bladensburg's letter was round to Sir Ulick. The old baronet found his son trying trout casts on the river.

"You . . . you . . . you . . ." he stuttered in rage. "You dog! Not content with ruining the name in Dublin, you ruin it here at home. At home here! My God!—where it has been high and honored for over seven centuries. You dog! You dog!" The old man was shaking as with ague. His face was white. His eyes were bloodshot. "The filthiest swine in a sty would not do it. The lowest thief in all Ireland would not do it. You cutthroat! You gallows bird!" Bertrand had wound his line up and was listening, expressionless. He might have been an amateur of drama savoring a theatrical situation.

"Is that all, sir?" he asked calmly.

"Go!" the old man stormed. "Go, before I forget myself and lay my riding-crop across your shoulders. Out! Out of my sight!"

"I think I'd better," the son said. Calmly he walked across to the house. Carefully he laid the trout rod away. Casually he picked up his hat and strolled down the drive—and that was the last the Fews ever saw of Bertrand Fitzjohn.

There were some reasons to account for this dishonorable work of Bertrand's, though they were not entirely sufficient. Desperate, chancy betting on the races; hysterical gaming with cards; wild carousals, too, reminiscent in a way of the days of the old Hell

Fire Club in Dublin. There were vastly uglier things also which I will not set down: there is a Great Tribunal before which, one day, I must account for these writings of mine. But all of this is not enough, it seems to me. You cannot explain it, but there are examples enough. There are the riding-masters scattered over the world, once officers in crack cavalry regiments, cashiered because they played cards too well. There is the pathetic colony in Morocco—all gone the way of broken men.

And though the Fewes, and the sturdy old Norman family who ruled it, never again saw Bertrand Fitzjohn, faint rumors came to them of his activities. Old Sir Ulick heard the story of his ivory-poaching in Portuguese East Africa. John, his brother, attaché at Constantinople, heard how he won ten thousand dollars from a tourist in Athens, and how, when the man discovered the cheating, Bertrand forced an apology at gun-point, and calmly and logically pocketed the money. There were rumors, too, of shady transactions in emeralds in Colombia.

Shamelessly frank, audaciously cynical, he made no secret of his name or lineage. He characterized his ancestors as boors, little better than the peasants they governed. His father he was bitter against as gall. His brother John, the diplomat, he described as stamping passports for round-trip, cut-rate trippers. Of Michael, a rising statesman, he said that his mentality was so undeveloped that it lay between putting him in a lunatic asylum or the House of Commons—and for family reasons the House was chosen.

But some peculiar quirk of affection or some dim background of chivalry kept sacred to him the name of that proud woman of the Burkes, high in lineage as he and his, who had borne him. On that subject

he brooked no pleasantry. He was once giving a lurid description of the family to a munitions broker at a New York club.

"And your mother?" the fat little, self-satisfied man asked.

The smile did not leave Fitzjohn's face, but he tensed like a leopard about to spring.

"I beg your pardon. What did you say?"

"Oh, nothing. Nothing. Nothing." The munitions man was white and pasty and his throat had gone queerly cracked and dry.

"I thought you made some remark," Fitzjohn resumed in his normal tone. Those few words, that glint of eye, that faint snarl had taught more than the munitions man the limit to which Bertrand was willing to discuss the shortcomings of the family tree.

And so, tall, commanding, lithe, curly-haired, hook-nosed, utterly evil, unbelievably dishonorable, Bertrand Fitzjohn went up and down the world, as the prayer says, for the ruin of souls. And in due time he met and married Fania Olinoff, whose real name was Fanny Olsen, and who was called the Pearl of Wallabout Bay.

IV

A very tall woman she is described to me—a very tall woman, tall as a tall man, splendidly proportioned, flaxen-haired, blue-eyed, with features as regular as a sculptured Amazon's. From afar she looked like a Norse goddess, but when you came near her you could see that her blue eyes were as hard as a gunman's, ice and steel mixed; and that there was something hard about her mouth, hard and sulky, as on that of a man who is fighting a bitter, unjust fight.

"She has got the calculating eye of a pawnbroker and the disposition of an ill-trained dog," De Morganheim the Russian once said of her.

"And what would you have, dear sir," his companion replied, "if you had experienced the times she has?"

It was only when she gave way to that glorious untrained silver voice of hers—great in volume as a sweeping wind, pure as Christmas snow on trees, melodious as a great bell—that the harshness went from her eyes and the sullen quality from her mouth. At times, singing, she seemed transported. Her eyes dilated or were moist with tears. Then, when she stopped, came the transformation.

It was in Panama City, at the cabaret called El Jardin, that Fitzjohn met Fania Olinoff. He had come up from Valparaiso, after a somewhat lucrative trip, and had seized the opportunity in Panama to educate some Panamanians in the more advanced planes of cards. His tuition fee had been rather high, and the Panamanians were dissatisfied. A couple of ugly-looking half-castes had trailed him all evening. He may have been aware of this, but he did not show it. Fania Olinoff, her turn over, came to his table. He rose and bowed.

"Cut it out!" she said abruptly. "I don't want any of that. I want to tell you there's a bunch laying for you, and you'd better get back to Ancon as quick as you can."

"Laying for me, are they?" he laughed. "The nasty beggars! Nice of you to tell me. Why?"

It was the third time he had visited the cabaret. He had been there the two preceding nights, and her eye had been taken by the cool, lazy indifference of him, the grand Norman manner, the dangerous glint of his eye. She was accustomed to being ogled,

offered drinks, treated with a sort of cynical admiration. But his eyes had gone lazily over her as though she did not exist. And, for some indefinable reason, on the first night she had looked forward interestedly to his coming the second; and on the second eagerly to the third. She had been made love to by men, ill-treated by them; but to be ignored was a new experience. He had risen up lazily.

"Those two blighters behind?" he asked.

"Yes. Those two," she answered.

"Excuse me a minute." He strolled down the room and stopped in front of the table.

"Gentlemen," he began lazily, "I am told you are laying to kill me. You have probably got a revolver and a knife each." Suddenly that tensing of his, like a leopard's; that snarl, like a leopard's, too; that magnetic, merciless glint of eye. "Hand them over! Do you hear me? Hand them over!"

There was a few seconds' hesitation—five it might have been. Then slowly, reluctantly, the weapons were put on the table.

"Now, get out!"

He went back to his seat, where opposite him Fania Olinoff was sitting, white as the bleached wall beside her. He sat down again.

"Nice of you to tell me," he repeated to her.

He left her with a courtly bow, and through the remainder of that evening and through all that night she could not get the image or the thought of him out of her mind. Minutes passed like hours until the next evening. Toward nine he lounged in. There was a quizzical smile on his face. Without any ado she went straight to his table.

"You look pleased," she said.

"I am," he told her. "My father's dead."

Those cold eyes of hers studied him up and down.

He took a cablegram from his pocket and tossed it over to her.

Sir Ulick died Sunday. Come home.—JOHN.

“I came round—” he was smiling—“to ask you to marry me.”

“What do you mean?” she asked, on her guard instantly.

His smile broke into a laugh.

“I mean what I say: bell, book, and candle; orange-blossoms and a champagne breakfast.”

“But why?”

“There is a custom in the family,” he explained, “that when one succeeds to the baronetcy one gets married. Nothing like keeping up the old customs. You’re the first passable woman I’ve met since I heard the news, so I’ve asked you. I’ve got an idea that a singer from a fifth-rate cabaret would make a splendid Lady Fitzjohn. . . . Well?”

She waited for a minute before answering, and for the first time in her life, perhaps, her face was suffused with blushes.

“I will,” she answered huskily.

And so they were married. And the papers carried an account to the effect that Fania Olinoff, the Pearl of Wallabout Bay, had married Sir Bertrand Fitzjohn of the Fewes, in the province of Ulster, Ireland.

And so they were married. But whether they lived happily, from their personalities, from their lives, from their minds it is hard to draw a conclusion.

From London they ranged Europe and Asia as far as Vladivostok. Alaska knew them, and New Orleans. They were remembered from Punta Arenas to Cartagena. Cairo remembers them, and Capetown too. They came as nobles; they left as thieves and cheats.

He used to treat her with a fair amount of decency, except when the black moods were on him. At those times his contempt for her was terrible.

"This," he would so occasionally introduce her into a company as shady, or nearly so, as they were themselves, "is Lady Fitzjohn. Her maiden name was Fania Olinoff. Her real name is Fanny Olsen, daughter of a Swedish longshoreman and a Danish washerwoman."

Once she rebelled. She looked him square in the eye.

"There's no need to introduce my husband," she said. "You all know him for the biggest gambler, crook, and gallows cheat unhanged."

"Good girl!" he chuckled. But he let her alone after that.

That queer little trick of hers, that everybody knows, of singing to herself in a strange, natural, spontaneous burst of melody, wordless, without marked rhythm, composing to herself as she sang, now gray and desolate when she was sad, now triumphant when her heart was light—that irritated him badly.

"For Heaven's sake, Fanny, stop it!" he would break in. "If you want to do that sort of thing get out on the fence at night."

But when times were hard, and when that peculiar Nemesis that dogs the heels of all unrighteous men had caught him unawares, leaving them without money, he was glad of her voice.

"Better get out and sing, Fanny," he would tell her. "We need the fare to the next town."

The money he took as a matter of course. There was no word of thanks or consideration for her. But she never questioned him. It was her pride to do anything for him. It was her pride to be always

thinking of him. She had picked up from his conversation here and there queer fragments of the history of his race—the story of the woman of the shee, for example, and of how it keened for all Fitzjohns dead in honor. And somehow she guessed shrewdly that the one person he held any respect for, on this or any other planet, was his mother. Once, when that dark periodical insanity was on him, she made a halting suggestion.

“Bertrand,” she asked, “wouldn’t you like to go home and see your mother? Don’t mind leaving me.”

“Keep my mother’s name off your lips!” he blazed at her. “And I’ll leave you any moment I please.”

Such was life with him, but she was satisfied. She loved him, and from one incident she believed he had something akin to love for her. That one incident was something she cherished in secret, in silence, all her days with him. That was a day in Shanghai when he discovered her tight-lipped and blazing with anger, in a hotel lobby.

“What’s wrong, Fanny?” he asked her carelessly.

She was glaring down the corridor.

“Swine!” she muttered. “Filthy beast!”

“Who is it? Where?” he asked, with that drop in his voice that portended danger.

“I don’t know who he is.” She was biting her lips. She pointed to a horse-faced Spaniard loping off in the distance. “There he goes!”

“Then there goes a dead man,” said Fitzjohn, quietly.

And that night he made good his word.

They had rushed him to the Flower Hospital from the door of the Plaza, where the squat, bulky man in the gray racer had aimed at him, shot at him, and

dropped him like a punctured balloon. He had been waiting for a taxi after dinner, and Fania was on Bertrand's arm when the thing happened. It might have been an emissary of the Five Companies who did it, for the score of the Companies against him was heavy and serious. It might have been an agent of the Macedonian revolutionists, whose plans he had sold to the Sublime Porte. It might have been one of a dozen people and interests. It didn't matter much. There was one fact clear and that was enough: Bertrand Fitzjohn was done.

He tossed and moaned from side to side of the neat white cot, occasionally coughing harshly, a foam at his lips. Over the bed his wife hovered—white, thin-lipped, tragic—too tragic for tears. Delirium had set in, and words came from his lips in an incoherent jumble.

"Never keen for me," he was moaning; "never for me. . . . Too rotten! Too rotten through and through! She'll be watching for it, poor old . . . never keen for me. . . ."

In spite of the terror and sorrow in her face every nerve of his wife's was taut to catch his words, to catch his meaning.

"First of the line the banshee hasn't cried for. . . ." Again that horrible cough. "Mother . . . disappointed. . . . She'll be listening. . . . Poor old mother!"

His wife caught at his hand and shook it in frenzy.

"Listen to me, Bertrand!" she was crying. "Listen to me! Can I do anything? Bertrand, before you die, for God's sake! Can I do anything?"

"No banshee for me!" he was murmuring again. "Poor old lady!"

A horrible fit of coughing took him. For an instant

his eyes opened and caught hers. A faint, game smile passed over his face. Another racking cough, and he lay still.

"Tell me, Bertrand, for God's sake!" she pleaded.

The doctor laid a hand on her shoulder.

"It's all over, Mrs. Fitzjohn," he said gently.

She rose up without a word. Not a sigh, not a sob, not a tear; but her face was white and more like stone than the face of the poor thing on the bed. She turned to the doctor.

"His name is not B. Fitzjohn. He is Sir Bertrand Fitzjohn. Would you telephone to an attorney's firm called Fowler and Russell? They will take charge of everything."

"Very good, Lady Fitzjohn."

She looked at her husband for a long minute, granite, immobile as ever.

"I am not Lady Fitzjohn," she told the doctor. "I am only—only a friend."

"Oh, I see," said the doctor, coldly.

Then suddenly she walked out of the room, quietly, firmly, her shoulders straight, her head high, her tragic face proud, like some queen descending forever the steps of her rightful throne.

v

From where she sat in the moonlight on the great stone portico she could see the garden cut into a sharp chiaroscuro of shadow and light; the rose-bushes faint like pale, shapeless vapors; the flower beds dim like water. Before her the meadow downs rolled forward like billows. On her left the river slid by in a long ribbon of silver, shot here and there with moonbeams as silk might be watered. Past that was the little deserted graveyard where the yew

trees murmured, and past that again the white stretch of road that wound toward Dundalk like some strange long serpent. She sat immobile as a carven image, her face haggard, her eyes fixed.

"My boy! My boy!" her lips would shape themselves to say, though no sound came from them. Bran, the great Irish wolfhound, padded up to her and thrust his cold nose against her hanging palm.

It was late now, past eleven, and the sounds of the great house had ceased. A group of boys passed, away in the distance, a mouth-organ marking time to their marching feet.

The faint sounds of the night were silent for a moment, or seemed so, and then high in the air, clear like silver, faint like distant violins, a low throbbing of song began. There was no form to it, no words—a faint, rippling minor that seemed more breathed than sung. The wolfhound stiffened like a pointer. She felt his great muscles tense beside her.

"What is it, Bran?" she asked.

From beyond the river the voice gathered in strength and volume. Beyond the river it was—that was certain—in the little graveyard where the yew trees murmured. Long, swinging notes came through the moonlight like the high notes of a pipe's chanter and faded off delicately like the fading off of a pipe's drone. The notes came over like leaves blown along a wind and seemed to drift about the white-haired old lady like leaves falling. The wolfhound trembled beneath her hand. She caught her gold-headed cane and stood up, shaking.

The slow ululation ceased, as a prologue might cease, and slowly into the singing voice came the keen note of wailing. Melody ran through the air as if sobbed out; the low notes seemed like moans, rising slowly to high piercing ones that were like ar-

rows aimed against heaven. The song shrilled hysterically upward for spaces and then quavered downward in passionate abandon. Queer whines of distress came from the wolfhound. The old lady pressed her hands to her bosom. "O God o' me!" she panted.

The high, abandoned keening ceased gradually like the last sustained note of fiddles, and little by little into the voice came a measured note of triumph and rejoicing, slow, powerful, magnificent. Note followed note, full, sonorous, triumphant, clearly cadenced, like the marching of a victorious army into a fallen citadel. It rang across the river like the song of Miriam after the passage of the Red Sea.

The old lady stumbled forward to the parapet. Her throat moved convulsively. Her hands clutched the low coping. The great hunting-dog followed in panic.

A cloud swept across the bleached disk of the moon, a faint yellowish cloud with tattered edges. A strange, eerie dusk swept over the landscape. High and strong the voice still rose, telling in its clear cadenced notes of victories won and ends achieved, of great men fallen on the field of honor, of high ideals fulfilled, of deaths noble as noble lives. It rang out proudly as the trumpets of heralds proclaiming champions; joyously as a celestial chorus welcoming a cleansed soul.

The cloud passed from the moon and again were the white, sharply defined lines of light and shadow. Lady Kate shook like a sick person in ague. Queer cold shivers ran along the back of her neck, and the skin of her face pricked as with frost. Across the river against the background of the yew trees a tall white figure was standing, dim, unearthly, terrible, its arms outstretched toward the great house, its

song ringing out clearly over the country-side. The wolfhound began to howl in terror.

"The woman of the shee!" she cried aloud. "The banshee! Oh, thank God! Thank God!"

She dropped on her knees in prayer, and hid her face in her hands. And as she raised her face again wet with tears, in thankfulness, she heard the song fade off, like the faint sound of drums and bugles of men marching afar off, and saw the white thing glide away swiftly from the river brink, across the little meadow, and fade softly into the shadow of the little graveyard, where the yew trees murmured.

The fast-trotting hack that belonged to Tim Connor drew up at the door of the Dundalk Arms. Pat, the old porter, strolled across to the sidewalk.

"So you left her to the train, Tim?"

"I left her to the train. I did so. And the tears running down her face, the like of rain in the month of March."

"A queer woman," Pat philosophized. "A queer woman, and in my opinion no better than she ought to be. A loose character, I'd go so far as saying. Do you know what she did?" He leaned on the seat of the side-car and looked upward. "Last night after she came she hired that automobile of Jer' Murphy's and drove it herself down the Few's road, so she did. All dressed up in white, so she was, with a big cloak. She didn't come back until two in the morning, and her crying like a child of two."

"Up to Captain O'Neill's she probably was. But begor and begob, she got nicely sold, for the captain's in Norway, fishing. That's why she was crying, the stree! A loose character. You're right, Pat, there!"

The porter looked up and down the street nonchalantly. He felt for his cutty pipe, struck a match on his trousers, and began lighting it.

“Did you hear,” he said between puffs, “did you hear that the banshee was crying last night for Sir Bertrand Fitzjohn—him that’s dead in America?”

“I did indeed!” Tim turned round. “And was there any reason the banshee shouldn’t cry for him? A wee bit wild he was, maybe—a wee bit wild. Oh, but as straight as a sapling, and the heart of gold!”

II

“O SNOWY-BREASTED PEARL”

IT IS one of the minor canons of writing that no story or poem should be written about an author, and I remember examining this once, and finding there were good and urgent reasons for it, but what they were I seem to have forgotten. Moreover, it doesn't matter very much, for when I tell the history of Desmond Fitzjohn I am not writing about the poet and dramatist we have all in our minds, I am writing the love-story of a poor young man.

As far as the poet and dramatist goes, let us touch on that now and have it done with. About eight years ago there appeared at the end of stories and articles in the periodicals poems accredited to Desmond Fitzjohn. They were very good poems. They dealt mainly with the glory of ancient chivalric figures or voiced a nostalgia for Ireland.

Where most Irish verse is melodious and facile, following the school of Thomas Moore, these had power and a rugged grandeur. It wasn't merely the playing of a rhymester with a great figure: the poet really admired and felt for Mary the Queen of Scots, and Cromwell the Lord Protector. Nor were the nostalgic pieces the usual whine of the professed Irish poet for Ireland and his old mother, bleating in the comfort of a New York hotel for the black bog water and the little roads. This man was hungry for the yellow of the gorse. The dry tinkle of the wind-swept heather was louder in his ear-drums than

the roar of the elevated train. There was a poet who meant what he said.

And then the director of a review published five pages of "The Old Age of Porfirio Diaz," and there was gladness through the land. A new poet had been born.

Yet we heard nothing of him—who he was, where he lived, what was his nationality, Irish, English, or Pole; English and Poles have a curious and refreshing nostalgia for Ireland. And then came the play "Appassionata," and its conventional Italian background, its fires writhing with drama, and the poor, harassed woman with the vital, throbbing speech. There was one person more surprised by the enormous success than the author, and that was the producer.

"Lis'en, kid, they ain't no credit coming to me," the producer will tell you, and he will roll a cigar from side to side of his wide mouth and rub a chin that has not been shaved for three days. "It's this way. They been putting up a holler about the shows I been putting on, see? They been saying, why don't I put on something good, see? Something highbrow. So I says, I'll give them some highbrow punishment, see? So I feeds them this, see? And they eat it up and holler for more. I thought it would flop in a week. It all comes to this," he adds despondently: "we don't none of us ever know nothing."

When the play was assured of success they excavated the author and found him to be a young Irishman with curling black hair and gray eyes, a face that would have been pretty but for the hard lines of suffering in it. Where the newspaper men expected to find "one of the boys," a reporter who had made a lucky hit, they found a very self-possessed young

man who was unquestionably a gentleman, whose name was Desmond Fitzhugh Fitzjohn, with a genealogy extending back to the days of the Conqueror; whose university had been gray Trinity of Dublin. An old Norman-Irish family of Wexford, he confessed smilingly, who had fallen upon evil days. Land-purchase, taxation, God knows what, had impoverished them. Yes, they had a castle, an old Norman stronghold in the Wexford hills. Did he expect to go back there? Yes, one day, possibly soon. He was very polite, very smiling, but there was a reserve past which they could not go, and they decided it was aristocratic hauteur of the less offensive kind.

But if they got little camaraderie from him they got an immense amount of material, and they wrote of the Norman-Irish side in an extremely flamboyant way. The castle in Wexford, now crumbling with romantic decay, was featured strongly, and in a little while there arose a legend about him of aristocracy coming once more into letters, and mention was made of Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Philip Sidney, Lord Byron. A middle-western journal referred reverently to the author of "Appassionata" as the Earl of Wexford.

All about him was the atmosphere of Irish nobility. His apartment in Madison Avenue had in it the flavor of ancient Irish, ancient Norman days, old carved chests, the gold and rose of mass vestments; the prints on the walls, old hunting days, and the assembly of the Irish Parliament in the period of Castlereagh. There was a heraldic device, there were two old portraits. Out of the squalor of a boarding-house he had come to this magnificence. It was very like the restoration of an exiled king. There the old body-servant, not Irish but Scotch. There the serried

ranks of books. There himself in the morning in turf-smelling tweeds; in the evening in black and white. "Appassionata" had had brought him all this.

He had not, himself, in any way changed from the days of his poverty. Old friends of boarding-houses grudged him nothing. They had always known of his pedigree, and they had always been aware of his innate decency and chivalry. And they will tell stories about him of how he would share his last cent—or, rather, not share it but give it. Also they will speak of his own peculiarity, of how any story of ill treatment of children made him tremble and all but cry; in point of fact, once or twice actually cry. And he would never go near the meanest parts of the city for the reason that the sight of cold and ill-cared-for children affected him so much.

There is a very interesting light on his character that Margot Kennedy, the actress, gives. Margot was, and possibly is still, a fine actress, but she has dropped out of sight, not having been on Broadway for some time. She is a fine woman, she has a big, warm heart, but she has one failing: she is addicted to continual and deplorably thorough love-affairs. She claims, as the greatest matter to her credit, that she turned Desmond's genius toward the stage when they were living in the same boarding-house off Broadway. "If it weren't, for me, I think, there would be no 'Appassionata' and no 'Lafayette.'" "

"Was he your sweetie, dearie?" a woman friend might ask, and not without a foundation of probability.

"He was not!" Margot would answer with emphasis. "My God, dearie, but you've a rotten mind! Desmond's the nicest kid and decentest gentleman it's ever been my fortune to meet. I'd as soon think of

making love to a monk. Not that he isn't a man, every inch of him, but just . . ." That's that!

He was liked by his old friends, liked by critics, and in the new circle in which he found himself he was liked, too. Now that he had fame and money, his old friends were shy with him, as old friends are. And newer ties were calling him—that New York that had leisure and culture and money. The houses of bankers and great merchants beckoned, hunted, found. The years of walking back streets were made up for by saddle-horses in the park. The cold and hungry winters of New York Destiny paid for with the soft Florida airs. And there were dancing and music. This success was not a whit less than Byron's in its way, considering the different age, the different competition.

He was very modest through it all. Success had not turned his head. When they wanted to know about poetic drama he told them of Ireland. He told them of an Ireland they had never suspected before; of an Ireland before Cromwell came, when the Normans were more Irish than the Irish themselves. Of titles beside which the newer earls and barons and dukes were the veriest labels of shops; the Four Knights of Ireland, the Black Knight, the White Knight, the Knight of Kerry, and the Knight of Glyn; and sonorous family titles, the Macgillicuddy of the Reeks, the O'Donoghue of the Glens, the O'Conor Don; bugle-calls of a changing chivalry, the Ulster King at Arms, the Athlone Poursuivant. And he told them of a little colony in Wexford, a townland of peasants, where the dialect was half Norman-French. He spoke of his mother's people, the Fitzhughs, each with the strange Christian names, Gillese, Foulke, Bertran, Piers. And of the first of

his race in Ireland, Sieur John Fitzjohn; Front de Bœuf, he was called, Bull's Head; and so big was he that only an eighteen-hand horse could carry him.

All loved him, advised him, but his old friends were afraid of him a little, thinking that all this adulation, this playing among the rich, would atrophy his genius. And then came "Lafayette."

Because I have dreamed that an ancient deed may yet
 Make old men's eyes grow moist, and the blood of the young
 men dance,
 I call to your mind to-night how great Lafayette
 Quitted the perfumed corridors of France
 For the most frigid, gaunt, American wilderness . . .

From the crash of the spoken prologue, until the end, the house was spellbound: great pictures and the sweep of verse, the mincing nobles of France and Marie Antoinette, the poor, poor queen; the cloaked, grim figure of Washington at Valley Forge; the shrill pipes of Boston—eh, how long ago! how long ago!

In the midst of all the adulation and all the publicity he decided to return to Ireland. Perhaps he was afraid of this fame. Perhaps he wanted to think. Perhaps some picture remained in his subconscious mind that called him back. Perhaps it was just the terrible homesickness of the mountainy people that spares none, gentle or simple, so that a day comes when they must see the native mountains or die. Perhaps . . . At any rate, he decided to go back.

And people painted scenes in their imagination of the return of Desmond Fitzhugh Fitzjohn to his family home, the ivy-covered machicolated towers throwing squat black shadows on the green Irish turf. The great wolfhound he spoke of galloping to

meet him down the graveled drive. Old grizzled servants thanking God for the return of the young master over the seven bitter seas. And somewhere a piper piping a little burst of dance music in greeting, horses neighing a welcome from their paddocks. And a mother out of an old aristocratic romance putting out slender patrician hands to him: "Desmond, my son!"

And they said: How easy for him to write romance, having been cradled in that sweet setting, how natural for him to see drama from the turrets of the towers around which Irish kerns and Norman nobles fought! What women could he draw but great, noble women, seeing the mother he told us of? How could his men be but gigantic from the stature of his family, and how could his songs not be musical when he has been hush-a-byed to the music of silver Irish pipes, and his verse not be proud and swelling with the baying of the wolfhounds in his ears?

And they said: At any rate, who grudges it to him? Is there any on whom success better sits? And they said: Come back to us, Desmond. Don't stay too long dreaming by the Irish rivers and the Irish hills. Come back to us.

II

The truth was that his father had been one of the under-gardeners at Perottscourt until he had been discharged for habitual drunkenness, while his mother was known the length and breadth of the barony for her bitter and evil tongue. His father's name was Johnson, his mother's name MacHugh, and he had been christened Dennis.

Put back his memory as far as it can on its infantile path, and the pictures in his mind will be of

a wet and dark cabin on the Wexford hills, of heavy footsteps that were dreaded because the feet that could hardly find the door-step were dreadfully agile at driving a kick at a small boy of seven. Ask him for his first memory of his mother, and he will tell you it was a beating he received from her for having let fall an egg. Go further and you will hear of the egregious drunkenness of both, when they fought horrible battles against each other, while the poor child cowered, whimpering with terror, in a corner.

He was sent to school grudgingly because the law demanded it, and once there he plunged with a passion into books, as being some sort of escape from the life at home. And the old schoolmaster spoke to the older priest of the new marvel and prodigy he had seen in his old age.

"All my life I have dreamed," the old master said, "of having some pupil who could one day be a great man, and I have nearly come to sixty years and disappointment, and I think I have a great poet and I cannot believe it."

"And Sarah said," the old priest murmured, "'Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?' Is anything too hard for the Lord?"

"It is Johnson's son, little Denny."

"Ah! That's bad. But he shall have his chance. He shall have his chance."

The drunken gardener and his bitter wife had no desire to see their son educated. Keeping him at school meant only keeping him from work, and keeping him from work meant less money for whisky and porter and idleness. It is a terrible thing, but in parts of Ireland a child is looked upon as no less of a chattel than a calf or a donkey. The interference of the old white-headed priest with the threadbare greenish

coat roused the drunkard to foaming rage. He vented his anger in the usual manner, which was to deal the boy a buffet that sent him hurtling across the room. The old priest became majestic with anger.

"I have never cursed a man in my life—" he drew himself up to all his gaunt height—"but if you hit this little child again I shall call upon the Lord Jesus Christ to strike you dead where you stand."

So Dennis was permitted to stay at school, though at home he suffered for it. He was never allowed to forget that he should have been working, and every poor mouthful of poor food he ate was given him with the reminder that he was not entitled to it. Clothes he had next to none, nor any shoes; and in winter the Irish rain is very cold and in summer the road is treacherous with sharp gravel and thorns. But still he plodded his two miles to school every day and two miles back.

At home he was made to do all the work of the house that his mother was too lazy to do, and the only respite from it he had was when Father Patrick would call around and take him out on walks and, mounted on his hobby of old history, tell him of the days when the heavy Normans held sway in the land, how with the knights and archers and men-at-arms they had penetrated from Waterford to Newry, and he told of Perrottscourt, where the Perrotts still were, and of its founder, Sir John Perrott, illegitimate son of the eighth Henry and Brother of Queen Elizabeth, for whom he was Viceroy of Ireland, and who later beheaded him. And of the great men of that day Fiach McHugh O'Byrne, captain of Clan Ronal, and the Brown Geraldine and Fitzsimon, who held Carlow for Her Majesty.

And one day Father Patrick took Dennis into the

garden of Perrottscourt, out of which his father had been kicked, and there in the rose garden they met a little girl.

"It's little Miss Nora," Father Patrick smiled. "Let you come here now, Nora Noreen."

Even at twelve her eyes and hair were beautiful, bluish-gray smudgy eyes, and long fair hair that was like scutched flax, silky and so silver as to seem nearly colorless, except when the sun caught it in a blaze of wonder.

"Do you know this little lad now? It's a little neighbor of yours, Nora Noreen, and a grand lad entirely."

"A friend of yours, Father Patrick?"

"Oh, sure, he's nearly the best friend I have. He's going to be a great poet when he grows up."

"Are you?" said the little girl. "I'm glad."

"You might so have him up and talk to him," the old priest urged. "Sure, 'tis lonely he is."

"I wish you could come," she said. "You'd like it here. I'd like to show you the peacocks and the swans on the lake. And the Shetland pony; you can ride him. And see if you can find your way in the old maze. You will come, won't you?"

All little Dennis replied was to break into tears.

But he was made to shake hands and say he would come. Old Father Patrick watched the sweet little lady and the ragged, barefoot boy. There were tears in his faded old eyes.

"Little children," he quoted to himself, "keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

At the Johnson cabin the news of the invitation to visit Noreen at Perrottscourt was received by his father with yells of rage. The idea that a son of his should visit a place he had been thrown out of!

"By the Yerra God!" he swore, "'tis how I'd

rather see you dead on this floor than moseying around with them kind. God's curse upon their breed, seed and generation. And if I ever get sign or sight of you, or even learn word of you going inside them gates, I'll strangle the life out of you, you dirty little jackeen. Them Perrotts is the curse of Ireland, and, mark me, I'll live to see the day—"the gift of prophecy came to him—"when they'll be turned out like rats, and with my own two feet I'll be leaping on the grand pianna!"

He saw Noreen only once after that, when he was at the university, but the vision of her as he saw her in the gardens always remained. It was sixteen years later in New York that he wrote "Rose of the World," when he asks pardon of all trees and flowers for not noticing them because of an enchantment put in his blood by—

. . . a rose I have seen
In all its white and mystical loveliness
And I but a boy of barely fourteen.

At seventeen he had finished his schooling, and gray Trinity, the dour-looking, kindly-hearted foster-mother of Irish genius, received him—there are always scholarships there for the poverty-ridden genius. Old Father Patrick's hair was a little whiter, if that were possible, his coat certainly greener, but his courage was fine as ever.

"I don't know what the bishop will say at all, at all," he pondered. "He's a roaring politician, and he's out to wipe Trinity off the face of the earth. It's maybe silence me he will, or get them in Rome to send me to Glasgow or Belfast—God between me and all harm! No matter! I'll offend my bishop and take my chance with God. Go up to Dublin now, and don't be too proud to put this in your pocket. 'Tis my son

you are. Kneel down now for my blessing. My little child, remember, religion is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. . . .”

III

And now he was in the college that had sheltered Goldsmith in his poverty, and sought to be kind to the savage Swift. And here were the streets where Stern had toddled as a child, none thinking that beneath that curly poll were “Tristram Shandy” and “Sentimental Journey.” And hither had come Shelley on his wedding journey. And here were born the beloved Moore and poor, tragic Wilde. The winds around the old pillars of the old Parliament House whispered a soft poetry. The horses clopped rhythm.

In his three years there Dennis saw Nora Perrott once. She had come up to see a football match, and recognized him in his sizar’s gown.

“Mr. Johnson!” And there was a tall, gloriously slim, gloriously sweet girl looking at him with violet eyes.

“You never came to see the swans. Why?”

He was embarrassed, awkward.

“I never could quite come.”

She must have understood. She turned away an instant.

“Are you happy here?”

“Tremendously happy sometimes, nearly all the time.”

“I’m so very glad. Please believe me, won’t you? I’m very glad.”

“Yes, miss.”

A few words, and a hand-shake and she went away, but her heart was sore. The “yes, miss,” with

its servantish sound, hurt her. The poor lad! He was like a bird with crippled wings. They had been so cruel to him, she had heard. There was something haunting about his eyes. As for him, he was dazed by her—a man who had seen a miracle. His heart, his throat seemed bursting. He was so moved he could make no song.

Came also a day when his father, the notable Jacobin, arrived. Into the elder Johnson's sodden skull there had seeped the idea that more money than he was getting could be dragged from the son. With an oath he pushed past the porter.

"Hell blast you, you dirty informer, let an honest man by."

The cool cloistered atmosphere for some reason drove the man to fury. The sense of security, the ease, the graveled walks, the trim lawns, made him feel here was no place for him. And if it was no place for him, by God! it was no place for a son of his. By ill luck he caught sight of Dennis walking in the distance.

"Come here, you jackeen. Come here, damn you, do you hear me? Come here!"

He caught the lad by the arm. Men came running up from all directions.

"Who is this?" they were asking. "What is he doing here? What does he want?"

"You want to know who I am, eh? Well, I'll tell you. I'm this pup's father. Do you know now? And I've got to slave and work, while he lives in luxury, eh? By God, I'll show him."

And with a savage smack on the side of the head he knocked the boy down.

He was pitched out, as he had been pitched out of Perrottscourt, as he been pitched out of drinking-houses innumerable. A large Irish policeman caught

him on the rebound in College Green, questioned him, laid forceful hands upon him, and he was seen no more that month.

Before the day was over, young Johnson had sold all his books, all his assets, his cap and gown even, and there sailed from the port of Queenstown next day, in the steerage of a slow liner, one Desmond Fitzhugh Fitzjohn, who astonished an usually imperturbable official by giving his occupation as poet. The official was wiser in his generation than the Child of Light. He entered him as "journalist."

IV

A dozen years had changed Dublin about as much as a dozen hours would change another city. There were still the wide streets, the wide squares, the omnipresent trees. Sea-gulls whining over the chief streets, and matronly Anna Liffey flowing sedately to the sea. People going to races and people going to revolutions. Men playing golf and men playing treason. Surly Trinity frowning at the House of Parliament; and the statue of Thomas Moore with its finger raised in conventional ecstasy; and the statue of William of Orange with his head high in conventional triumph.

Who Desmond Fitzjohn was, Dublin did not know. For Ireland gives only such time to literature as can be spared from politics, with the result that they are usually a little behind the times. They are discovering Longfellow now, and are rather upset at that daring modern novel "The Scarlet Letter." However, on the mail-boats from England he had met people in the smoke-room, and because he looked clean and intelligent and had been in America he was invited to dinner with a broad hospitality. To

old Georgian houses in Merrion and Fitzwilliam Square, where remained the grandeur of an elder day when Ireland had peers and parliament. Priceless furniture and silver and glass. The conversations were begun with a certain formula by the principal guests.

"In my opinion the country is going to the dogs."
To which the answer was:

"The more I live, and the more I see, the more I am convinced that the Irish people have a great destiny before them."

"Behind them, you mean. You've been listening to that old blatherskite John Redmond."

"I'd rather listen to him than to that dirty murderer Sir Edward Carson."

"In my opinion, a little more murder and a little less oratory would be a grand thing for the country."

"Oh, I'm with you there. I'm with you there. Within reason, of course, within reason."

And then turning to Desmond they would ask:

"Tell us now, Mr. Fitzjohn, and tell us the truth, and don't be afraid of hurting our feelings, what does America really think of us?" The only answer to which was a very wide gesture, which might mean a lot or mean nothing, but seemed to satisfy them.

"Oh, 'tis a great country."

"Oh, I tell you what, we're a great people."

And one evening at a dinner party he met her. There stepped forward to him a shining presence, hair that was more silver than gold, violet, eager eyes, a woman slim and nearly tall as himself.

"You know me." Her voice was fine and vital. "I am Nora Perrott."

"Yes," he said, "I know you, Miss Perrott."

"Nora Perrott," she corrected him. "You never came to see the swans."

"I couldn't," he told her. "My father would have beaten me."

"Yes, I know."

Was there a mist in her eyes, he wondered, or was it just warm understanding? Oh, the sweet firm face, the little nose, the arched mouth that was like red velvet! The slow, understanding smile, that was like music. All the beauty he sensed in her from head to foot, the perfect woman, the silver woman. He saw her hands: they were so slim, the skin was like rich Chinese silk, and vital, so very vital.

"How do you remember after all these years? I have spoken to you only twice."

"From the first time I saw you with Father Patrick—poor Father Patrick!—I have remembered you. There seemed to be a meaning about you, like a story in a book; and isn't it a story, Desmond—I call you Desmond because we were children in the same place—the little boy of the Wexford hills who became a great man in a little space?"

"A great man, Nora?"

"Oh, yes, a great man, I know. I know all about you, Desmond, or nearly all. When you went to Dublin you were like setting out on a great journey, and I thought all was well with you. All life was so peaceful, so humdrum, and you were the only person setting out an adventure. I met you in Dublin and you seemed so well. You were happy, too, you said."

"I remember; I couldn't speak well."

"And then you disappeared and everybody said you had died. The little champion from the Wexford hills . . . it seemed such a pity the adventure ended. Do you know, I cried. Do you mind my telling you this?"

"Do I mind! Good God, do I mind! I always felt none cared a tinker's curse."

"Well, I did. And then one day somewhere I saw a poem, under the name Desmond Fitzjohn, and the poem was the boy of the Wexford mountains. And I knew you were well."

"I never thought any one knew of me."

"If you had come to see the swans, Desmond, you would have felt it. What a pity we didn't know each other better."

"You are forgetting," he said, "the long way between the houses. And when you have been beaten as a child, the fear is terrible. You were never beaten, Nora."

"You can speak of it now, can you? Oh Desmond, you have become a great man."

v

They were like two children who had grown up dumb, and knew each other by warm telepathy, and had received together at one moment the gift of golden, musical speech. They were as two people who had lived together with a high wall between them, and knew each other's intimacies, but had never seen the lineaments of the face, and now the high wall had crumbled and they saw each other, fairer than rainbows.

She had come up from Wexford for a few days. It was now Thursday. On Sunday she must go back.

"I am like some one," she said, "who went out to pick a few twigs on the mountainside, and came upon the Burning Bush."

"And where shall I see you, Nora?"

"You will see me all these days, Desmond, if you wish to. We were children together."

The sun now rose on those magical days, dancing in the morning, as though each morning were Easter.

Softness of Irish summer, and adventure of meeting her in the morning. In the evenings she was a stately, understanding woman. In the day, hatted and gloved, violet eyes and small eager nose, she was like an elf or some ironical fairy. She bloomed with the day; in the evening, wistful, very beautiful. And when he left her for the morning her violet eyes were like violet stars.

She would hear of everything that had happened to him since he left, of all the struggles in America. When he told her of walking the cold, cruel streets, her eyes filled with tears.

"Oh Desmond, my dear!"

And her lips parted and her eyes shone when he told her of "Lafayette."

"Little champion from the hills of Wexford!" she said.

And he told her of the women he had met in America. On this she examined him with meticulous detail.

"Tell me of Margot Kennedy," she said.

And he told her of the big-hearted woman who was always falling in love, and who had persuaded him to write "Appassionata."

"Did she fall in love with you, Desmond?"

"No, Nora. She was only a very good friend."

She wrinkled her small nose.

"Still and all, I don't think I'd like her. And so you never married, Desmond?"

"No, Nora."

"Nor fell in love over there?"

"No, Nora."

"And then to whom is 'Snowy-breasted Pearl' written?"

"That?"

"Yes, that!" And she quoted:

"How shall I state your beauty? These harsh English words
Are alien to your image. And only the golden bees
Will understand my Gaelic. They and the Irish birds
And the hurt, whimpering waves of the Irish seas.
There comes to my heart the chord of an ancient writer,
Who sang of a silver girl,
In days when the air of the world was lighter,
(When kings' daughters danced upon a green lawn
And there were more apples on the trees)
A Ferla an Vrolle Vaun!
O Snowy-breasted Pearl!

"To whom is that, Desmond? To whom is that?
And who is your Snowy-breasted Pearl?"

"Do you really want to know?"

"Yes, Desmond, else I wouldn't ask you. May I
know?"

"You said you had always been thinking of me. I
have always been thinking about you, Nora."

"Then 'Snowy-breasted Pearl' is to me? Oh Des-
mond!" A clouding blush came over her sweet face.
"You wrote it because we had been children to-
gether."

"Yes, Nora. Because—" he hesitated—"because
we had been children together."

As suddenly as speech had come, speech departed.
They had been as unconscious as children until now,
happy as birds. They had been dancing about the
Burning Bush, and out of the depths of it had spoken
the slow accent of God. There was no cloud, no
fear, but only a mystery, a hush. . . . And neither
could say anything then, nor all day. And yet each
knew the other knew. Through Dublin they wan-
dered, with the convention between them that noth-
ing had happened, nothing been said. The sun shone
on the Liffey, the mountains drowsed, the sea-gulls
breasted the high air. Veils lifted from the face of

the ancient city, the veil of fighting, the veil of tragedy, and through the transparency of the third veil there were visible the tenuous figures of old Dublin spirits—Tristram and the Irish princess, Iseult, and savage Swift, and secret Stella; and Sir Edward Fitzgerald, who is sleeping, and Pamela, who fled far from the tragic land . . .

They bade each other good-by clumsily at the station.

“Desmond, I’ll write to you. I’ll write you when I get home . . . to-morrow I’ll write . . . no, to-night.”

“Yes, Nora.”

“Desmond, were you thinking of coming to Wexford?”

“No, Nora, I was not. I was afraid.”

“You were right. Don’t come, Desmond. You’d be hurt. Desmond, I’ll write you to-night.”

They looked at each other tragically. Each wanted to kiss the other. They didn’t know how. So ignorant, so maladroit! A green flag waved. A whistle blew. The train moved. And then suddenly—

“Oh Desmond!”

But it was too late. All he could do was gaze after her. All she could do was gaze through the window. Ignorant, maladroit. And in a minute she was gone.

VI

He had said he would not go to Wexford. But Dublin was like a box that had held something and was empty now. It was a lamp that had gone out. It had no more meaning. Useless. So next day he said:

“I’ll go down this afternoon.”

“And . . . ?”

"I'll go down and come back."

"And what'll you do?"

"I'll look at Perrottscourt from the road and come back."

"And what good will that do you?"

"I don't know."

"It will only make it worse."

"I'll go, all the same."

Past the hills, past the sleeping towns, past the sea the train went, past shoulders of heather and stretches of green turf. And the nearer he came, the more a dread and melancholy came on him.

"Go back," he warned himself. "Get out at the next station and go back."

"I won't," he said, stubbornly.

At Perrottscourt nothing had changed. The same beds of geraniums; the same road; the same dust, even. Every tree he knew, every stone. The little sleeping village, the greenish church, the old school-house. The bake-shop, the creeper-covered post-office. The three places, "licensed to sell whisky, wine and beer for consumption on the premises," each of them hated in his heart because in the old days out of them, staggering, had come his father with the heavy hand and the ready boot. And here was a thatched cabin; his heart stood still for a minute; there was a gaunt, slatternly woman hanging over the half-door, chatting to a neighbor.

"Well, now, Mrs. Johnson, I'll warrant you told her what she was."

"Indeed, Mrs. Moloney, I did so. I said: 'And who are you, might I ask? Aren't you the woman,' says I, 'that has seven children and never a marriage line? Isn't it "Steal-the-Hens" they call you,' says I. 'Go along,' says I, 'you tinkers' biddy'."

Good God! Good God! His knees were weak, his brow wet. Well, safely past, thank God. Why had he come? Why? Why?

Now a great ivy-covered wall, and arose the gates of Perrottscourt, tall wrought-iron. He looked at them, stupefied. Queer, he hadn't remembered they were so tall, so high, so strong. And she was back of those gates, and outside of them his mother, and somewhere in the village saloon, his father, spending the money Desmond allowed them, in whisky and porter "to be consumed on the premises."

He turned away. He would visit the green graveyard where Father Patrick slept, and slink off.

"Desmond, Desmond!"

Out of the wicket gate by the great high ones she had run, bareheaded.

"Oh Desmond, why did you come? I'm so glad you came. I saw you from the drive, Desmond, and I couldn't believe my eyes. Are you crying, foolish boy! Desmond, come in and see the swans . . ."

VII

They came to the rose garden where they had met sixteen years before. The turf was emerald, the graveled walks yellow as gold, the rose bushes stretched in lines like soldiers. There blew so soft a perfume on the air that one could almost see it take shape like dancing butterflies. And everywhere were the golden bees.

"Do you remember me, Nora?"

"I can only see your head, Desmond, a dark head and gray eyes. Your head was low and sunburned then, and now it is high and there is gray in the dark locks, for all you are so young still; but your eyes, your gray eyes, are the same."

"And you are the little fairy princess become a queen, Nora."

"No, Desmond, I am just an ordinary girl, whom you like very much, perhaps, and see with your poet's eyes. Don't treat me like a queen or a fairy princess, Desmond. . . . Come, Desmond, the swans have been waiting for sixteen years."

Their bills were black, their heads high, their white swelling bodies were like leaves of some gigantic flower. In the water one could see their grotesque black feet. They paddled stately as an armada. Seven white swans on the dark lake.

"They are wild—did you know, Desmond? When autumn comes they go, and they come in the spring. They have never yet missed a year. . . . Desmond!"

"Yes, Nora."

"You are not going to stay—in the village?"

"No, Nora."

"Better not, Desmond. Listen, Desmond, I can have you driven over to catch the mail-train at Ballynorman. It passes at ten."

"I'd better go now."

"You must stay to dinner. There is nobody but myself and my two uncles—my mother is dead, Desmond, did you know? She died three years ago. I knew she couldn't outlive my father long. So there will be nobody there to bother you. And Desmond!"

"Yes, Nora."

"I started writing you a letter last night, and I finished it this morning. I will give it to you to read on your way home."

"Nora, what does it say? Give it to me now."

"Oh no, Desmond, not now." She was blushing.
"Come, I want you to see the old maze."

VIII

At dinner the two uncles rather embarrassed him. They had come home from the fair at Gorey, and met him cordially. Nora had introduced him as Desmond Fitzjohn, the great poet, whom she had met in Dublin. One uncle, Robert, was a huge red man with a red beard. He had squat, cruel hands. The other, Simon, was short and dark, with gleaming black hair and a gleaming black eye. Simon had been a colonel in the Indian army. He was typically a horseman and a soldier. In the dining-room was a painting of Robert in a gray covert coat, and a gray high hat, with his red beard spread like a banner. Simon had a soft purring drawl in speech. The voice of Robert was a booming cruelty. Desmond was afraid of these men.

The great dining-room was antique with shadows. An immense fireplace where logs burned even in June. Old, malevolent portraits who regarded him ironically, with here and there the face of some sweet smiling woman. He sat on Nora's right hand. In front of him sat the drawling Simon. Opposite Nora great red Robert. They were each splashes of color, broad red beard and sleek black head. White cylinders of wax with golden flames. The round-faced, pippin-faced butler. And Nora, slender as a flower, her happy eyes, her silken hands.

"We had a boy here," Simon drawled, "who went to America and made quite a reputation. Son of a tenant, eh, Robert?"

"Tenant be damned!" the red one exploded. "Son of an under-gardener here. I had to kick him off the place. Found him sleeping his liquor off in the maze, begad!"

"Johnson, I think his name was. Do you remember, Robert?"

"Do I remember? Every time I pass him he swears at me, and if he doesn't, his wife does. She's going to have me crucified when the revolution comes, she says. Begad, 'twas him we nearly killed in the dog-cart."

"The drunk coming out of Conolly's?"

"And that was his wife that ran and threw stones after us, and called me an old red fox."

"Did you ever hear of their lad in America, Mr. Fitzjohn?"

The room was swimming around him. He had an impression of Nora's white, tense face. She couldn't speak. The red Robert looked at him in surprise, looked at him very keenly. Gave a guffaw of laughter.

"Oho!"

The brow of Simon frowned in wonder. The gleaming black eyes went from Robert to Nora, from Nora to Desmond. Came a wry smile.

"Oho!" roared Robert. "Mr. Fitzjohn!"

In an agony of panic, Desmond rose, overturning his chair, staggering. He oriented himself for an instant, burst from the room, burst through the hall, burst out into the night. His feet crunched on the drive. He ran out through the gates to the road. The moon was rising. Somewhere a curlew called. And the leaves of the trees souged with the souging of summer. But he had no eyes, no ears. He ran on in panic. And as he ran, he gave little cries, like a hurt animal.

The road settled down on its long jog to Ballynorman. The moon rose higher, cleared the hills. There loomed up the dim blue profile of mountains.

The trees whispered. There was the scent of the hawthorn, and not yet had the primroses vanished from the hills. And westward were the minute pale stars. Such a night! Such a heavy heart! And if it had been on any other occasion he would have heard the little pipers in the tinkling heather. And he could easily have believed that the sounds the leaves made were the marching of the leprechauns, the green-clad minute pixies of the Irish hills. They were shod with silver, they had green caps. But to-night all the fairies were dead. . . . He settled himself for the six more miles of the road.

There was the swinging trail of a horse behind him. The light whir of wheels, the lamps of a dog-cart. As it came nearer he moved toward the hedge to let it pass. His face was white and strained in the glare of the lamps. He wanted it to go on. He didn't need a lift.

"Oh Desmond! Is it you, Desmond, my dear?"

The horse was reined in. She sprang from the dog-cart to the road. She was different. She was dressed in tweeds. She had a little brown hat with a feather in it.

"Desmond, were you going away forever without seeing me again?"

"I'm awfully sorry, Nora, for to-night." His face twisted into a gallant grin. "I'm sorry for letting you in for it. I shouldn't have come down."

"Oh Desmond!" she cried. "I'm sorry you were hurt. Those swine—all the awful swine of that place, your swine and my swine! Oh Desmond, my dear!"

"Hush, Nora, it's all right." She cried against his shoulder. She trembled as she lay there. She stood back and arranged her hat.

"Listen, Desmond," she said. "Don't look at me, please, for a moment. Do you want to marry me?"

"Nora!"

"Do you mean yes, Desmond? Say yes, if you mean it."

"Yes, Nora."

"Don't look at me yet, Desmond, please. Will you marry me at once, just right away?"

"I can't speak . . . I just can't speak."

"I think you mean yes, Desmond. Listen, my dear, I'm not going back, either. I've got a bag in the cart, and money with me if we need it. Desmond, we'll go to town to-night, and catch the boat for abroad in the morning, and you can get a special license somewhere—from the Archbishop of Canterbury, I think, or some one. Will you do that, Desmond, please? If you don't like me when we're married, you can send me away."

"Are you sure, Nora? Are you sure you want to?"

"Yes, Desmond, very sure. And Desmond, we'd better get up and drive off now, because we mustn't miss the train. And Desmond!"

"Yes, Nora, yes?"

"You'd better kiss me, Desmond. You've never kissed me. And we've known each other since we were little children. Maybe you wouldn't like me at all, Desmond. You'd better kiss me."

"Hush!" he warned her. "Listen." Above the tinkle of the heather he had heard the note of a little piper piping and from the moonlit trees came the rustle of the light feet of leprechauns.

III

TRIANGLE

ON FIRST sight you might find it hard to place Detective Thomas Denihan; you might not think of him as a police officer at all. But you could not imagine him as a head waiter, say; or the owner of a garage. You could fit him into no particular background. A stalwart man of forty-five with hard blue eyes—physical condition not so good as that of a professional athlete but better than the average man's. He had black hair. His hands were powerful and hairy, but without the calluses of labor. His clothes were usually of blue serge, with a black derby hat. His shoes were normal. His jaw was powerful but not truculent. He was about five feet ten in height and weighed somewhere near one hundred and ninety pounds. His eyes were the only thing peculiar about him: they had the trained inscrutability of a gambler's, but where a gambler's eyes are defensive, his were ready to attack. There is a subtle difference I cannot express in words.

There was no street in New York where Detective Thomas Denihan could not walk unnoticed if he wished. He was an invisible man in this respect: he was so like any other man you would pay no attention to him. He might be alone in the street, and if you were questioned later you would say, "Yes, I . . . I think there was a man in the street, some man."

But let him stop you for a minute, though you were the most innocent person in the world, and drop his hard eyes on you, and you wouldn't say, "You've made a mistake, I'm afraid." You would say: "What is this? What does this man want . . . mean?" It would stop you short as a stone wall. There was power and will. Immense power, and implacable will. For the first time in your life probably you recognized the terror of the law. . . . And you were sorry for poor devils who had broken into silkloufts, and harassed bank clerks who had falsified accounts. You were sorry with an acute personal shock. You thought, "Poor devils, they could not get away!"

You would recognize him as a detective, when you were told, but from himself you would not recognize his background. We on the hither side of the law have grotesque ideas of the actions and reflexes of those without the pale. Centuries of inhibitions have given us a romantic slant toward the criminal. Our murderer of women is a quaint Bluebeard. Our highwayman is Robin Hood. Our man-killer is haunted by the ghost of his victim. Our robber buries his treasures in fear. Correspondingly our detective has his color; the nose of a bloodhound; the reasoning faculty of a Pascal; the bravery of the hero of some book. Also do we make of him one who follows the criminal, outraged by the offense against public morals.

So we have imagined unto ourselves an underworld, much as we have imagined fairies, gnomes, black magicians. We have imagined a simplicity of evil, which if true, could soon be conquered. We have imagined a series of black splashes against a wall of cream, and our duty is to clean them, and the world will be well. But it is much more complex.

Have you seen settlement workers go down to the underworld and come back soon, their hearts broken—or remain there, their faces taking on an immense spiritual strength? They set out thinking, as you do, that the problem was a simple equation, and they found it to be an egregious calculus. Very complicated. Very unsimple. . . . Let us see it through the eyes of Detective Thomas Denihan.

For him, as he walked through the streets of New York, men and women and children were not human beings. They were potentialities of evil. He never thought of them as having warm feelings, a love of husband and children, a love for mother, a delight in a secure home. He never thought of them as singly radiating beneficence. Were you to take the finest, prettiest woman in New York and say to him, "Ponder over her," what would arise in his mind would not be a picture of her in happy wifehood or sacred as a mother or strangely calm and beautiful in her November days. He would think of her in her future days and after marriage, falling for some guy, as his phrase was, and back of that were possibilities of blackmail, burglary, murder even. Or she might be bitten with the fever of card games, and, that growing on her, become dissatisfied with the tameness of card games at home, and be introduced to the surreptitious apartment, where roulette wheels click and private telephones bring results of races. Or in the ordinary business of life her nerves might become worn, and she might indulge in harmless seeming specifics that bring one to the gray land of drug-addiction by minute steps. . . . Point out to him an honest young bank clerk and he would think: "Some day some guy may show him a wad of jack he's won on a lucky long shot. And this kid thinks it's fun

and plays safe little bets. And then one day some wise-cracker gives him an inside tip, and he takes a chance and whether he wins or loses he's a gone guy." Or show him a young couple of New York starting out in life, and his thoughts would run thus: "This kid'll work, but the girl will get lonely after a while, and some gay fellow'll come and take her round to dances, and the kid will get good and sore. And some day he'll go over to Newark—see!—and buy him a gun, and he knocks the pair for a goal. And then we comes and gets him." The motivation of crime, the extenuating factors, he did not report. They weren't his business. That was up to a judge and jury. His job was to tap a man on a shoulder and say: "Listen, kid, you got to come along with me."

New York, for him, was composed of criminals, virtual or potential, and rich men. He had a strange theory that any man with over a million dollars was a crook. It was not so much a theory as a conviction. If you were to argue with him, he would keep repeating: "Well, how did he get it? Tell me, how did he get it?" And as higher mathematics, economics were beyond him, he could not be convinced. On the rare occasions when a man of financial standing absconded, there would be a glint of triumph in the blue eyes. "Didn't I tell you? What did I say? Didn't I tell you?"

Of the city that is good he knew nothing. It was only a background against which the forces of evil played their drama. Of homes where illegality did not exist he knew only those of his fellow-policemen, plain-clothes or harness men. And to his mind they did not belong to the city. These people and their families were a caste apart, as players are, or folk of the circus. And their conversation ranged about

civic politics or the cost of uniforms and sooner or later came to crime. The wives of these men had a seal of secrecy, as it were, upon them, and even their children were marked. Other children seldom played with them, being overcome with awe.

But of New York where illegality is current there was nothing Denihan did not know. Hardly a pawnbroker in the city but was in close touch with him, for it is the business of the detective to watch the outlet of gain, nearly all crimes being gainful. He knew also the saloons where crooks gather in a back room. He knew the women who cherished outlaws like themselves. At each great boxing match in Manhattan, as the crowds passed through the turnstiles, somewhere near at hand was Denihan. And when that most innocuous-seeming of all things, the six-day bike-race was in progress, you would be sure Denihan was prowling around, for the six-day bike-race has some strange attraction for the underworld. . . . Lap after lap they watch the circling riders in a dull maze. . . . And there you would always find Denihan stalking, his head filled with portraits of men wanted for murder, wanted for burglary, wanted for this, wanted for that. . . . He was always alert, was Denihan. He was counted one of the dozen best detectives in the world.

Now here is where, according to the technique of authorship, I should cite an example or so of the cleverness of Denihan. I ought to make him vivid to you by a trick of the trade, as the phrase is—show his paces as one shows the paces of a horse. But any policeman could tell it more truthfully than I. Any writer of melodrama could make it vivid, if untruthful. The parlor magic of my profession is very hollow to me. . . . So . . .

You must see him a stocky, clean-shaven man.

Black hair under a citizen's hat; his blue eyes, blue and cold as ice, never friendly, not inimical. You must sense his unhurried stride. You must understand him being in a gathering and hardly visible. He was there. You wouldn't know he was there. But he was there. . . . Wait! Have you ever seen a pair of handcuffs? They are not a weapon. They are not offensive or defensive. But they are a fact. And they are very visible. Cold, heavy, incredibly strong. They chill you. You rarely see them. They are produced in need. There they lie, cold, chilling, gray. They have not the cogency of a revolver. They do not threaten as a black-jack does. There they lie, a seemingly dead arabesque of steel. And . . . *click-click!* Detective Thomas Denihan!

I consider it one of the most inhuman traits of Detective Thomas Denihan that though unmarried, and having no relatives about whom he cared a tinker's curse, he elected to live alone, in a house of his own. I don't know if he ever had any love for a woman, but if he had, it must have been very long ago. He never considered marriage—for this reason: he had seen so many women of the underworld, their intense, brief loyalty; and then their men went to jail, and perhaps from loneliness, perhaps from the urge of necessity, they took up with new partners and sooner or later contracted another underworld union. So they seemed to him fickle, untrustworthy. And ordinary women were to him as strange as a foreigner is to us. There is a subtle barrier.

As for his living alone, and not in a boarding-house, he had an undefined feeling. He didn't want to mingle with people, to have them know him. Also, they were a little afraid of him. In a small way, the feeling that drove him to solitude was the feeling

that makes incognito the English hangman, or the French Monsieur de Paris, who operates the guillotine. I can't imagine either of these living in a benevolent home with warm people. I see them in a small dwelling apart on the edges of the town, near a railroad station, perhaps. . . .

So Detective Thomas Denihan lived in the lower part of a two-family house he owned in Flatbush, on one of those avenues named after letters of the alphabet, and near the junction called romantically King's Highway. The tenants of the upper apartment he rarely saw. They were a clerk in some department of the city works, and his fat wife. Once a month they left their rent in the mailbox. He had only one servant, an ancient woman who kept the house clean and got his breakfast. She was continually mumbling about the County Kilkenny, in Ireland, and her false teeth were defective, so he seldom heard her. He replied to her, "Tch!" and, "Leave it there!"

In the morning, after breakfast, he would go out, have his shoes shined carefully at the Greek boot-black's, choose four cigars carefully at the corner tobacconist's, buy a morning newspaper, get into the next-to-last car of the elevated, and report for duty in Manhattan. In the evening, coming home, he would remove his shoes with a grunt and, pulling on a pair of carpet slippers, rummage in the ice-box for a bottle of beer, and for the roast-beef sandwich old Mary O'Brien had made ready for him; and sitting down to them he would read carefully an evening newspaper. And then after a while he would get up and go to his bedroom, take off his coat, wind his watch, put shield, gun, and handcuffs to one side, undress, folding his clothes carefully, put on an old-fashioned nightshirt, and go to bed. After a few

shakes, a grunt, or two, a punch at the pillow, he would be asleep.

Now, to all of us a certain distinct entity will symbolize our abstraction. To this author a certain critic will stand for all criticism. Ask your average man to think of a race-horse and he will think: Man o' War or Flying Fox. To boxing followers the chiaroscuro of the ring, the clang of the gong, the waving towels are brought to mind, or bring to mind the name of poor Joe Gans, or of the mighty John L. Sullivan, or of Mr. Benny Leonard. It is something like the reflex word one gives back to psychoanalysts when they spring a word at you.

To Detective Thomas Denihan all crime was symbolized by the Royter Gonof. The Royter Gonof was in crime what Denihan's self was in detection of crime.

At police headquarters anywhere you will find the record of crimes imputed to the Royter Gonof, crimes which it is difficult to prove but in which, according to conviction and belief, the Royter Gonof was implicated. The Royter Gonof, which is Yiddish jargon for the Red Thief, began his career on the New York East Side, robbing, holding up, small Jewish stores. He is, I regret to admit, of Irish ancestry, and his name possibly is McCarthy, or Kelly or Kavanagh. However . . .

There is a hiatus between his robbing push-carts and his organization of gangs to do it for him. There was a brief plunge in business—theatrical, I take it—and suddenly the Royter Gonof blossomed out as one of America's greatest confidence men.

His appearance, from all I hear, is magnificent. Consider six feet of bone and muscle, one hundred and ninety pounds of sheer strength. Consider an

open, trust-inspiring Irish face. A great boxer, a great actor was lost in the Royter Gonof. Consider that waving chestnut hair, those gray eyes. Consider his dress—up to the minute, and not flashy enough to arouse suspicion. Were he a thin man one might have steered clear of him, but who would ever associate crime with a bulky, robust man? Oh, solidity!

And so he went up and down the country, playing on his assumption that all men are fools, and ninety-five per cent of them essentially dishonest. And I wonder if you can blame him. When the Royter Gonof has been rotting in jail for years, men will be leaving for Barcelona to get the fortune of the Spanish prisoner. Solid farmers of the Middle West will enter into a dishonest combine to cheat a pool-room by the supposed tapping of a wire. And automobile manufacturers will thrust thousands into the hands of artists like the Royter Gonof to avoid the publicity of having been at a private ring fight where one of the boxers was supposedly killed. And amateurs will insist they are shrewd enough to play cards for high stakes with professional sharps. This will always go on until men respect the law that prohibits them. One day they will; one day hens will swim. There will always be crooks, and fools to be fleeced. But there will be few crooks like the Royter Gonof. Few will figure any more that passion existed in the brain under that red head, where was a surgeon's cool patience. And they will not be deceived by the hearty bluffness that concealed contempt. They were a well-matched pair—Denihan and the Royter Gonof. But Denihan was the better man. Denihan won.

I should like to have seen that comedy in New York, with the stake for one man's liberty and a supposed fool's money. And Denihan posing as a

saloon-keeper of Larchmont, lately having sold out. And the Royter Gonof, the bluff sportsman, familiar of the race-tracks and enemy of the pool-rooms, who knew a good thing and how to pull a trick. A dissatisfied employee of the telegraph service who would hold back the result of a race, and give them the information so they could bet a sure thing. And the pretty lady who toiled to get Denihan's heart. And the bell-boys and the taxicab-drivers planted to assure Denihan that "Mr. Schuyler—he's a prince!" And the marked money passing. And the sudden clicking of handcuffs, and other detectives appearing as in a conjuring trick. And after a moment's puzzlement, the gray eyes of the Royter Gonof being leveled at Denihan. And the extraordinary mellow laugh.

"You poor flat-footed copper, you don't think you've got me."

"I'll say I have!"

And it looked so in the Tombs. It looked so in New York when the judge passed sentence on him. Then Denihan left him. And at the Grand Central, when he was being brought to Sing Sing, there appeared six of New York's toughest. And right in public came the cracking of automatics. And two dead men on the cold floor. And the whisking of the Royter Gonof to the waiting car. . . . While the onlookers wondered when the movie would be released, and searched the galleries with their eyes for the grinding camera.

With the escape of the Royter Gonof, there arose in Denihan a terrific burst of passion. He had worked so long, so cunningly. Technically all success was his, but actually he had lost something immense. To have put the Royter Gonof behind bars . . . and he

blamed himself, he blamed the whole force passionately, though he knew there was no blame to be attached to any one. The Royter Gonof had escaped. That was all. And it was up to Denihan to get him again. The boiling salt of his passion crystallized into cold, gray intent.

"The next time I'll put him behind bars myself," he promised. There would be no hitch. And now there was a newer zest to it. The Royter Gonof was wanted for complicity in murder. Everywhere was his portrait: "Wanted for murder." And his aliases: alias Ernest Forbes-Jones, alias Brooklyn Red, alias Fordney Schuyler, alias this, alias that.

There was also now a knowledge in police circles that the Royter Gonof was more than an extremely capable confidence man. "The King of the Con. men," as some newspaper phrased it. He was a bad guy. It wasn't a matter of tapping him on the shoulder and saying: "Hey, fello', the chief wants to see you." It was taking your life in your hands, for the Royter Gonof, having openly brought about two murders, would not stick at a half-dozen. But they weren't worried. Denihan could handle him. And that Denihan would one day get him was never in doubt. "When Denihan gets the Royter Gonof . . ." they would say, with as much certitude as "When spring comes . . ."

Now, it would seem an easy thing to go out and get a man wanted for murder, a big, red-headed man, in the city of New York. And people are forever blaming the police for not solving the riddle put up to them. But one rarely lays one's hand on a man in flagrant deliction. One has to find out first who did it. And, then, how to get him. Granted the first, the second is no easy task. People are traced by stable property and stable emotion. And criminals'

property is very fluid. One usually catches them by their emotions. A father, a mother, a wife they love.

And then one must be on the watch all the time. One listens for rumors. And only one rumor out of many has a scintilla of truth. And when that is traced to the source it is usually too late.

Also, criminals die as others do, and there is no publicity to their burial. An unknown passes out in a hop-joint. A careless look from a coroner, and he is thrown in the potter's field. And the police who want the man seldom know that Sergeant Death, as we Gaels call him, has executed a prior warrant. They go on looking. And if he is still alive, it is hard. For everything helps the criminal. They develop the mystery of intuition. And the crowd through which they glide hampers pursuit by the policeman. There is needed patience, infinite patience. They wait for the infinitesimal slip. And sometimes the slip passes unnoticed.

But all this notwithstanding, Denihan knew he would one day get the Royter Gonof.

It seemed to him, looking forward, that the putting of the Gonof behind bars would mark a point in his career from which he would spring to immense things. What, exactly, he did not know. He might open a detective bureau of his own. He might somehow transfer to the Federal Service. To be Commissioner of Police in his native city of New York was not outside the bounds of possibility. All this after the Royter Gonof was safely behind bars. Also there was a tinge of personal vanity in the matter, for the Red One had sent him a note ("Somewhere in Yonkers" it was addressed from) and it suggested he stick to the dips of Fourteenth Street or get a job as a horse detective. All of which was clumsy and boyish sarcasm but got under Deni-

han's skin. He smiled grimly and thought, "Wait!"

It became so much of an obsession with him that he would dream day-dreams of the Royter Gonof and the day he would catch him. On Fifth Avenue, perhaps, the Gonof might be walking, and Denihan would smile and come up beside him: "Ain't you and me got a date, fellow? Put out them lunch-hooks. Come on!" Or he might trail him to a hotel, and wake him up, like some dreadful nightmare. Sooner or later he would get him. At headquarters there was always veiled allusion to the chase of the Royter Gonof.

"Well, how're they coming, copper?"

"Oh, all right."

"Hear anything about this Royter guy now?"

"I'll get him."

"I'll say you will. They say this bird's a tough guy. Shoots an' everything."

"'S' all right!"

"I guess we ain't so tender ourselves, hey, copper?"

"'S' all right!"

There is a period in the career of a great man—a point, rather—when he ceases to be a practitioner of a thing, and becomes the thing itself. He more than fades into his background. He becomes part of the background. The financier is one day master of money, and at a later day is money itself. The artist becomes art. The clerk, routine. They have lost human attributes. They are absolute. And the world fades from them: the exceeding greenness of fields, the fun of a circus, the patter of boxers' feet on a springy floor. Pleasures are deliberate, sought for. Spontaneity dies. It is a very terrible, tragic thing.

I think this is what old theologians meant when they spoke of a man losing his soul.

And also in this phenomenon I can see what the theologians call Providence. Before this ghostly transfusion of humanity into the absolute takes place there is always a chance for a man to anchor himself in the warm human world where people are hurt and cry and are sympathized with, where joy comes and friends are glad, where we shall not be blind to the infinity of stars. A man falls in love, I mean, or a child is born, a child of curls and laughter, and once more the sun dances of an Easter morning.

There is always the chance for a man. It always happens. Jeer at, sneer at, flout coincidence as much as you like. It exists. The theatrical *deus ex machina* is a crude symbol of a subtle fact. Have things never happened at just the right time? Think back. Just a minute. Think! Forget this bank-book, that debt. Haven't you ever known in your own life . . . Ah, I thought so!

There was no chance of his marrying. Denihan was not that sort of man. Nor would he ever adventure in the kingdom of little feet. Yet before Denihan ceased being a policeman and became police, salvation arrived to him. . . . I present Lorna Doone!

She saw him coming down the concrete steps of the alphabetical station near King's Highway. She was a small black pup, very scared, very lonely. Everybody had passed her by, and it was near twelve o'clock, and a cold night, too. And she must have liked the looks of the portly man coming down the concrete steps. She wagged her tail. She stood in his way. He stopped and looked at the moving stern. The brown eyes pleaded.

"Why'n't you home?" he stooped and patted her. "What you doing out so late?" She moved closer.

"Huh?" He said as he stood up. "Run on home!" And he started to walk off. A half a block later, he knew she was following him. He turned.

"Run on home! What you following after me for?"

She came closer, her tail wagging slowly. She opened her mouth as Aberdeens do, showing her teeth ingratiatingly.

"What you trying to do?—bite me?"

She pulled her only trick: sitting on her haunches her forepaws in the air, her mouth strained to an open grin.

"For God's sake!" said Denihan. "I guess you got no place to go. I guess you're lost.

Dogs were foreign to Denihan. That is, his heart had never known them. He could never know the pride barbers have in French bulls. And the police dog seemed to him an overrated animal—as indeed it is. And the bloodhounds sent occasionally on the track of murderers were "hick stuff." Also, their loud baying was against the twenty-one cardinal points of detection. And the toy dogs of venal women were to him mosquitoes. This lonely terrier on the edge of Flatbush was the first dog that had appealed to anything human in him.

"Yeah, I guess you're lost," he said. "You better go wit' me."

There was a precinct station a block away. A great gaunt place. He picked the pup up under his arm, and moved toward it. He went in, his footsteps making a heavy echo in the flagged hall. The lieutenant on duty rose up in respect.

"Anybody lost a dog?"

"No, Sergeant. Not that we heard."

"I found a dog. I thought some one mighta telephoned in."

Under his arm suddenly the dog began to tremble. The gauntness of the room, the hollow echo, all summed up to terrify her.

"No, nobody telephoned in."

"Well, I found this pup. It had ought to have a license or something."

"Ain't it got a tag? On its neck?"

"No, it ain't got no tag."

"Well, leave it here anyway, Sergeant, and we'll take care of it."

"Yeah, I might as well, I guess." He turned to the pup. "I'm going to leave you here. You'll be all right here."

But she was frightened, terribly frightened. Her eyes pleaded. She thrust forward her muzzle, and suddenly licked his face.

"I guess I'll take her home. She don't look satisfied to stay here."

"She'll only be a nuisance, Sergeant."

"No, I'll take her home, I guess. Lemme know if any one telephones."

He let himself into the house, snapped the lights on, and put the pup on the floor.

"Well, are you satisfied now?"

She wagged her tail.

He went to the ice-box, and got his sandwich and beer. . . . He paused,

"Maybe you're hungry? Maybe you'll like something to eat?"

He thought a moment and got a tin pan, and filled it with milk, as he would for a cat. It struck him, though, that a dog needed more substance, and fishing around the kitchen he came on a package of zwiebacks. He broke them into the milk.

"Eat hearty!"

As he fixed up to go to bed he was bothered a moment. "I guess you ought to go in the cellar," he figured. "But they ain't no bed fo' you down there." The pup trotted ahead of him into his own room. "Well, I guess you can't do much harm," he said. He put her solemnly on a couch while he undressed. "You'll be all right there," he said, and he went quietly to sleep.

When he awoke next morning he found her standing by his bed, wagging her tail.

"For God's sakes!" he mused. "For God's sakes!"

Old Mary O'Brien leaped in the air when the pup followed him into the dining-room.

"What is this at all, at all?" her mumbling rose to a querulous squeak.

"That," said Denihan, "that's a dog!"

He vouchsafed no more information until he was leaving. He patted the dog on the head.

"If any one calls from the police precinct for the dog, well—well, tell them to call me up. Dat's all."

At headquarters he sought out John Leidner, who was the possessor of many blue ribbons for Airedales, breeding and selling some of the best pups in the States.

"Hey, John," he asked. "What do you do about a dog?"

"What do you mean 'what do you do about a dog'?"

"How do you keep a dog? What do you give him to eat?"

"Give him anythin', d'ey eat anythin'."

"Anythin', hey?"

"Anythin' but potatoes. Don't give 'im no potatoes."

"No potatoes, hey?"

"No potatoes. Anythin' but potatoes. And don't give it no fish. De bones stick in der t'roats."

"No potatoes and no fish, hey?"

"Anythin' but potatoes an' fish. And don't give it no chicken bones."

"No chicken bones, hey?"

"Yeah, an' give it plenty t' eat. One good meal a day."

"'S'at all?"

"'At's all. And give it plenty of water. It'll be fine. . . . Say, Tom, what kind o' dog t'is you got?"

"Ah, a lil black dog."

"'Tain't a poodle? You know—one o' dem black poodles?"

"No, 'tain't a poodle."

"'Tain't a cocker spaniel, hey? Floppy ears, an' everythin'."

"'S got small ears."

"'Tain't one o' dem Scotch terriers. One o' dem . . . you know . . ."

"No! I don' know."

"Was you ever in a gin-mill?"

"Sure I was in a gin-mill."

"Well, I know you was in a gin-mill, but der's a picture of Scotch whisky in a gin-mill, wit' two dogs—dems Scotch terriers."

"I ain't took no notice."

"Well, der's a gin-mill on T'irty-seventh Street has them."

"T'irty-seventh, hey?"

"T'irty-seventh and sixth."

"Sixth, hey? . . . Well, much obliged, John."

"Oh, dats not'in'. . . . Say, Tom, ever hear anythin' about . . . you know . . . the Red Guy?"

"I'll get him."

"I'll say you will, boy. We're for you."

He rang up the ancient Mary O'Brien. She came to the phone all a-flutter.

"This is Denihan, you know. Denihan, the man you work for. Say, about that dog . . . you know, the dog. Don't give him no potatoes. And no fish . . . fish . . . I said fish, what swims, what you eat on Friday. And no chicken bones. You know . . . chickens. None o' them bones. . . . Anybody call up about him? No. All right. Ring off. Goo'by."

"Guess it must o' dropped out o' some car," Denihan surmised the case of the dog.

In the saloon on Thirty-seventh Street Denihan stood opposite his glass of buttermilk. He watched the picture of the Scotties.

"That's him," he decided.

The accent of a Scottish golf professional at his native ritual of drinking whisky commanded Denihan's attention. He edged nearer.

"There's a good dog?" he hazarded.

"Best dog in the world," the garrulous Scot burred. "Barring the Scottish deerhound the Scottish terrier is the greatest dog alive."

"Will you have somethin'?" said Denihan.

"Oh, I don't mind. Maybe I will. A wee bit whisky."

"So you say them's a good dog."

"Well, if you want to know, mister . . ." and the Scot told an egregious story of the dog possessed by his cousin Mungo of MacMungo of St. Mungo's—a story my Gaelic ancestry inhibits me from retelling, but suffice to say that it exemplified a sagacity rivaling that of the elephant.

"And as for fighters—och, I could tell you stories!"

“Will you have another little—?”

“Och, I don’t mind, a drop o’ whisky. Well, I had another cousin, Donald MacDonald of Donaldston, and another man in this town had a bull pup . . .” In a righteous cause the Scottish terrier had the ferocity of a saber-toothed tiger. “But they’re aye a gentle dog,” he went on. And under the stimulus of a third treat he gave the impression that the thirteen children of his cousin married to Farrell MacFarlane were raised through the efforts of a conscientious working terrier.

“So them’s a good dog, hey?”

“You might say, mister!”

Denihan turned to go, but the praise of his dog had warmed his heart to such an extent that he ventured advice to the golf professional.

“Y’ought to lay off o’ that stuff. That ain’t no good. Y’ought to leave that alone.”

But the Scot had a theory of his own.

“Och, away wi’ you, man! You’re soft. That’s the greatest thing in the world, that. It hardens the gut.”

None ever turned up to claim the pup, so after a while he accounted it his own. He had talked to another friend of his about the disposition of the dog.

“What do you do wit’ a dog?”

“What do you mean ‘what do you do wit’ a dog’?”

“A dog you found—w’at do you do wit’ it?”

“If they ain’t no owner found, you can keep it, or you can send it to the Bide-a-wee Home.”

“What’s de Bide-a-wee Home?”

“A place where dey keep los’ dogs, and if a guy wants a dog he sends dere, and he gets it for not’in’— So as de Chinks don’t get him. . . .”

"De Chinks?"

And Detective Thomas Denihan was regaled with some of the mysteries of Chinese chop-suey—which may or may not be true, but gives room for thought.

"I guess I'll keep the mutt."

With more gusto than, and as much importance as if he were taking out a marriage permit, he got a license for the dog. He put the tag around its neck with a sort of ceremonial awe.

"Now, you're my dog, see. You're my dog."

And she wagged her tail, and showed her teeth in her grotesque grin, and her eyes were filled with recognition.

"You're my hound, see."

A small boy who sold a weekly periodical was commandeered by him.

"Boy, wanna make some money?"

"Yes, sir."

"Wan' a job?"

"Yes, sir."

"Take this hound for exercise an hour a day every week."

"Yes, sir."

"'S wort' two dollars a week," Denihan expanded. "But you got to be careful. You got to take him where he won't be run over by cars, or anything. You got to be careful of him."

"It ain't a him. It's a she."

"For God's sake!"

"Yeah, it's a she. Didn't you know it was a she?"

"No. For God's sake!"

"What do you call her?"

"What's her name, hey? Well, her name is— Her name is a good Scotch name. Her name is Lorna Doone. Yep, that's her name." He leaned down and

patted her. "How do you like that? Ain't that a good one? Lorna Doone—that's your name."

His life had become surprisingly complete now. For some particular reason it was a pleasure to come home. Home was no longer merely a place to sleep. As he came along the numerical streets of evenings she would be at the door scratching to get at him. She would jump clumsily at his knees. She would gambol like a young lamb. And great games would go on between them. He would affect not to notice her when eating in the morning, while she sat waiting for a lump of sugar. Also his main dietary at breakfast became chops or liver, and he would give her a bone or a little edge of liver, and her ears would stand up and her eyes sparkle. Every morning he took a dignified but affectionate farewell of her in the porch.

"Well, so long, old lady!"

On his days off, which before now he would usually spend on a sofa or hammock, reading and smoking cigars, he took her out for long walks, down to Brighton Beach or Coney Island. And many a policeman would smile in surprise to see hard-boiled Denihan and his little ward. Once or twice an innocent patrolman mentioned the wonder that he didn't have a bull or at least an Airedale, and drew upon himself a disquisition upon the origin, habits, ferocity, and loyalty of the Scottish terrier rather boring to hear.

All the damned-up affection in Denihan's heart turned to the little dog. And it didn't evince itself in a sloppy way but with a grotesque dignity. He was dignified even when giving her a bath in the big tub.

And on her part she loved him, and she began to

take on some of his characteristics as dogs do, his dignity, his alertness, his aloofness. It is a very strange thing how a dog comes to resemble its owner. Is there some occult current between them? What is it? Why don't we know? We can make a great organ play electrically from a piece of pierced paper. We have television, talkies, wireless. And yet we can't tell how the grass grows green. Or how a dog loves us. Or why a horse will be gentle toward one stranger, and savage toward the next. It is very dispiriting, however.

Once Denihan burst out: "If I ever found a woman like that," and he pointed to Lorna Doone, "I'd marry her."

And yet if you noticed him in the street, which you hardly would on account of his low visibility—if you came to recognize him, let us say, you would still get the cold clink of handcuffs. There he was, the gray invisible man, the symbol of the cold sword of the law. His eyes blue as ice, and as cold. His brain crammed with pictures of this one and that one, wanted for this thing and that thing. He has seen you a thousand times if you pass through Pennsylvania Station or the Grand Central. He has seen you a hundred times if you go to boxing matches. He has seen you a dozen times if you are patron of the six-day bike-race. And if you occasionally go to a burlesque show—of course not! I beg your pardon. But Denihan has seen you, ticked you off, and never given you a second look, unless you are a big man with gray eyes and red hair. . . .

There is a great French poet visiting New York, a man with gray eyes and a great red beard. He is like a minor Irish king. "Y a de bougres très curieux dans ce pays-ci, mon cher Donn. Par exemple, figurez-vous" . . . and he tells a story of a squat

black man who has followed him, rushing up to shake hands suddenly, tapping him on the shoulder, asking for a match, and ending by tweaking his whiskers. The poet called a policeman, but the policeman only laughed. "J' ai fini par lui lancer une claque à la figure. Non, je n'ai pas réussi." I should like to have seen Denihan side-step that slap on the cheek. . . .

The influence of the small warm thing at home did not detract from his steely desire to get his man. He thought with two parts of his head. One went to the little dog. And one was for the great murderer and confidence man. Early in the morning the dog went out of the foreground, and there entered the possible Royter Gonof. And the day being done, then Royter Gonof was shelved as the possibility, and Denihan came home to the warm welcome of the little black dog.

Occasionally he would talk to her as he smoked his cigar.

"I thought I had him to-day," he would observe, "but it was another guy. Anyways, I can wait. The longer I wait, the carelesser he gets, see!"

The little Aberdeen wagged her tail and showed her teeth. She didn't see, but she quite agreed.

"I'll get him yet."

She got her forefeet on the edge of the sofa, swinging her tail emphatically. Sure he would get him. He'd get anybody in the world.

She gave a light spring and was in his lap. He shifted his paper so as not to disturb her. Ancient Mary O'Brien, coming into the room to dust, permitted herself to criticize.

"Anybody would think that was your wife," she cackled in shrill humor.

"Hey?"

"Anybody would think that was your wife. Tee-hee! Tee-hee!"

"Listen, woman. They ain't no wife can come up to this dog. . . ."

"We'll get him," he soliloquized. "And then . . . And then . . ." He wasn't quite sure, but somehow an age of milk and honey would date from that epoch—for him and for the little dog.

Then suddenly the bomb burst at headquarters. The chief sent for him.

"The Gonof is in London," he announced. "Go and bring him in."

"I'll bring him in."

"And listen, Denihan, remember this. When the Gonof is got he does to the chair, on account of that scrap in Grand Central. Nothing can save him. And he knows it."

"I'll bring him."

"The Gonof can take every chance in the world, and you can take none. He's as bad off as he can be, so killing another copper don't mean anything in his young life. See. You can start on the first boat."

"Just a minute, Chief."

"What's troubling you?"

"Oh, not'in'. I just. Oh, not'in' at all. . . ."

At the steamship offices, he came to the point abruptly:

"What do I do about a dog?"

"How do you mean?"

"Bringing my dog wit' me?"

"You've got to get a permit from the Board of Agriculture in London to bring a dog into England."

"That's bunk."

"We can't take a dog aboard until you have it."

"How long does it take to get one?"

"About three weeks; maybe five."

"I'll see the British Consul. He'll gi' me one."

"I don't think he can."

"Sure he can."

The British representative he approached with dignified secrecy.

He told of his plans; got some information about Scotland Yard, which he had already, but to which he listened with a show of interest. Suddenly he sprang his request.

"Now about my little dog. . . . I want to bring my little dog wit' me. That's all right, ain't it?"

"I'm afraid you can't unless you've got a permit."

"Couldn't you fix that up for me?"

"You've got to get it from London."

"Oh, go on! You can fix that up for me."

"Sorry!"

"Now, wait till I tell you. This little dog, see. I picks her up, and it ain't got a friend in the world but me. Honest to God, I could tell you stories about that dog. You ought to hear her cry when anythin' keeps me from home. Honest to God, she'd break her heart. You don't know this dog."

"I'm sorry, Sergeant, but the law is very strict. We're fearfully afraid of rabies."

"But this dog ain't got no rabies, or not'in'. She's only a little black dog."

"Yes, I know, but—"

"Do me a favor now. Couldn't you? A personal favor?"

"I'm dreadfully sorry, Sergeant."

"I'd be under big obligation to you, if you could only do me that personal favor. Supposing these Scotland Yard guys got stuck about somethin' in

New York. I'd help them. Away out of my work and everythin', I'd help them. Gee, there's not'n' I wouldn't do for them! Just lemme bring along my little black dog."

"You'll only be away for six weeks. Hardly that."

"Yeah, but you don't know this dog. Honest to God, you got no idea. I tell you somethin', this is a little female dog, you know, and twice a year we got to coop her up. I send her to the vet's, that's what I do. Honest to God, it's a shame. She just trembles and pines. I go to see her twice a day when she's there, but even at that she pines. See. And when she comes back she's thin as a rail. And she ain't herself for weeks. She ain't got nobody but me, see. And if I was away she'd be dead in a week. See? There's no way of telling her it's all right, I'd be back. She'd think I was gone for good. She'd think I'd laid down on her. See? Sure you can fix it up. Just one little black dog."

"Sorry, Sergeant; really sorry. It's the law."

"You can't do anythin' for me?"

"You know, yourself, as an officer of the law, that it must be regarded."

"Well, that's a bum law," said Denihan.

"Yeah," he said outside on the pavement. "That's a bum law. T'ell wit' a law as bum as that."

"T'ell wit' all of you," he said.

He went slowly back to headquarters. Made his way to the chief's office.

"I been thinking, Commissioner, maybe you better send somebody else over for Red."

"What!"

"You better send somebody else."

"I thought you always wanted to get this man, Denihan."

"Yeah, but—"

"Listen, Denihan, let two of you go! How about it?"

"Oh, it ain't that." The detective's face flushed at the implication of fear. "It's just this, chief. I get sick on a boat. I get sicker 'n a dog. When I was going down to Florida last year, I got awful sick. I wouldn'ta minded if the boat had gone down, I was that sick. Yeah, you better send somebody else."

"And yet, Denihan—" the commissioner's eye was cold—"once you used to be on river patrol. You didn't get sick then."

"No. This seems to have come over me later in life."

"Think it over, Denihan."

"Honest to God, Chief. I'd rather turn in my shield than go on a boat. If I could go by train now . . ."

"Very well. Send in young McCarthy as you go out."

"What do you say—" he lifted the pup to his lap, "what do you say we go to the country and live, hey? . . . And we take old Mary O'Brien wit' us to cook. She comes from the country in Ireland—Dublin or Belfast or some place. . . . And we take a place near the water, hey? Where you and I can go fishing, hey? I wonder if you can swim, or maybe it's only them water-spaniels can swim. Maybe we can teach you to swim."

"And maybe you want to raise a family, hey? I don't know but maybe you'd like a family. Well, we'll see."

"We'll sell this house to that sap upstairs and go out into the country, hey? You and me, hey? And

we'll take old Mary O'Brien. . . . And maybe we get us a real estate business or somethin'. Or a garage or somethin'.

"What do you say, hey? Are you on?"

"All right, let's go. . . ."

IV

THE HONORABLE OF THE EARTH

THE great house on Madison Avenue is gone, and the great clanging iron-works and the seven motor-cars.

If you want to see old John Harbord again you will have to go to the sleepy New Jersey village where he was born. There is a modest house there, a quiet tradesman's house, on the poplar-dotted road, and John Harbord comes out of it twice a day to go to the village to get his newspapers. The village people look out their windows as he passes with his high head and square workman's shoulders, his plume of iron-gray hair, and his banneret of iron-gray beard, and they wonder to themselves whether he is merely a gigantic fool, or whether he is a sly knave concealing past crimes in one huge, generous action. People are suspicious of great men. The lions of Rome fed on the flower of Christendom, and Christ was crucified.

If you want to know, too, of the Princess Sobieska, I can also tell you. You will find her in one of those drab, God-forsaken pensions in Brussels, on the Rue Seychelles, if I remember aright. She has little children now, and their titles cannot mend a hole in their shoes or buy them holiday bonnets for Easter. She waits up at night for her prince to return from the gaming-tables. She has the air of having swindled some one, of a person found out in a peculiarly mean crime.

I sometimes have a fancy of the spirit of John Sobieski, King of the Poles, roaming up and down the world and to and fro in it. I see him stride into the drab rooms in the Rue Seychelles, with his swinging fighter's step, and I picture him looking at that descendant of his who bears his name. His fine royal lip curls contemptuously and his stabbing brown eyes snap. It is not a pleasant vision, and to offset it I imagine him greeting John Harbord. I see his face light with understanding and his head nod in appreciation, for he sees before him a man who, like himself, did greatness because of the greatness that was within him.

I

The turmoil of the iron-works beat its way into the office of the plant with the noisy truculence of a storm. There was the hurried tattoo of a great drill driving into block iron. There was the rattle of monster chains in derricks. A foreman with throat and lungs of brass yelled imperative instructions in a seemingly enigmatic language, and a volley of straining grunts, of yo-hos, of fierce hisses answered him like an off-stage chorus, or like the crew of a barkentine hauling in the mainsail to the boatswain's frenzied encouragement.

The Bishop of Utica leaned back in his chair. Disappointment showed in his chiseled face.

"But the Moros, dear Mr. Harbord—that is not indiscriminate charity. It is a national duty."

The ironmaster brought his fist down on the desk with a whack of finality.

"I don't care," his hoarse voice rasped out. "I don't believe in giving anybody any money; I believe in letting them work for it. In the second place,

here is my town of one hundred thousand people. I'll attend to that. Everybody in the town is dependent on me and on my works. Anything I have to give goes to them. Let every other employer in every other town do what I do, and there'll be no need for charity."

He swung about in his swivel-chair, and his deep-marked, coarse-skinned face confronted with a look of challenge the high-bred, well-groomed features of the primate. And as the bishop looked at him the thought came into his head, as it came into every man's head, that John Harbord was a living challenge to battle. His hand, as it lay on the desk leaf, was an index to him. It was thick, stub-like, square; in the wrinkles and folds of the knuckles one could see traces of the days when he had worked with his fingers instead of with his head and will, in the form of a delicate pattern of grime, like the tracing of an ivy leaf, that no soap could ever erase. You saw it as the hand of a man who could hold the reins of government firmly. And when you looked at his face it was there as you would imagine it to be—iron-gray, like the products of his works; tested, dependable, unbreakable. Eyes that were slits of gray light; nose cut with the master blow of a creator's chisel; eyebrows that were brushes of iron-gray hair; mouth grim and restrained; cock's plume and jutting bannerol of iron-gray wire for hair and beard.

Forty-five years before, when he was twelve, he had begun his battle as engineer's helper in the great iron-works of which he was now master and owner. He was fifty-seven now, and he could never tell on what day his hardened arteries would carry him off. But he still knew his way about a furnace, and he could still take his trick at a rolling-mill, he boasted. And he was prouder of that than of the ten millions

at which his rating stood in Bradstreet's. Many men are born to gold and silver, but few are born to iron, and he was one of those, he asserted with grim satisfaction: he was the ironmaster, the master of iron.

And the bishop, as he sat watching him, saw on the screen of his mind the whole legendary cycle of this man take form and color. For he was already a legend. He remembered the story of the first and only strike at the works. A labor agitator from New York had come down to Leonardsville with flaming words and flaming promises. He tempted the men and they fell. They had no grievances. What brought them out was a fit of mob temperament. They dropped the slicers at the furnaces. The levers of the derricks were let go. The rolling-mills stopped with a purr. A silence fell over the works. The men trooped toward the gate with a clatter of feet.

A squat, burly figure with a black beard turning grizzled was locking the gates with elaborate care. He kept his back to the mob and finished his work slowly and carefully, like a watchman doing rounds. There was a deliberation to the thing that was deadly.

"Rush him, men!" the labor man yelled. He took a quick stride forward.

The figure turned about slowly, deliberately, as before. The men saw the jutting beard and metal features of the ironmaster. He fumbled in his hip pocket and brought out a huge revolver. He leveled it at the strike-maker.

"Come over here," he said quietly.

He tossed the agitator the key.

"Open that gate and get out of here," he ordered, "before I blow your head off."

The strike-maker opened his lips and shut them

quickly. The black, white-faced mass of mechanics and mechanics' helpers, furnace-men, slicers, engineers, and navvies stood silent in their greasy jumpers and caps. The only sound was that of the hammer of the pistol rising to full cock, like a snapping of fingers.

"I'm going to shoot," said the ironmaster.

The gate clattered and clanged as the strike-maker hurried through it. He stopped outside.

"If you're not out of sight in ten seconds I'll kill you," the ironmaster continued evenly. "If I ever see you again I'll kill you. Get on." He turned about to the men.

"I won't say anything," he said angrily, "except this: You're the biggest collection of damned fools I ever saw together in one place. Get back to your work."

He walked back toward his office. As he sat down on his chair again the sound of the busy plant struck his ear. The derrick swung its chain upward in a whining clatter. Furnaces roared like the wind in valleys. Iron clanged like faulty bells.

And then there was that other episode that Dobbs, the thin, ascetic vicar, had told him—the episode at the death-bed of Anne Harbord, his wise, placid wife. That was twenty years ago.

Harbord had sat with her in the wide, bright bedroom on Madison Avenue for three nights and for three days, until the doctors saw that even his iron strength was groaning. The end came suddenly. There was a little whimper from the bed, and a panic-stricken white hand grasped at the ironmaster's huge paw.

"Good-by, Anne," he said quietly. "Good-by, old sweetheart. There's nothing to be afraid of. It's as

pleasant over there as it is here and you'll get as square a deal. And I'll be over to you as soon as I can get away."

Good theology, the bishop thought; the theology of an honest man!

He was no conservative, was John Harbord. He believed in progress. When a new machine was invented he put it in his shop. He kept himself abreast of his time in science and politics. He had not, like many others of his pattern, a deep trust in democracy and a contempt for all institutions outside America. He had ideals for the conduct of his business. He believed in efficiency, in making as much money honestly as one could. But he leavened it all with a strain of chivalry that sounded to some like the dribble of a school-boy socialist. He believed in work, not for the sake of work alone, not for the sake of money, but for something that he saw dimly like the shadow of the Grail. He wanted all labor to be strictly for the good of mankind, for the good of his country, for the good of himself.

I think it was because Anne Harbord died he began reading, for the great house seemed to go all of a sudden cold and lonely for lack of her placid presence. And Edna was either at school or in Europe, or dancing or week-ending in company of the hired chaperon. He tackled his reading as he tackled life: he wanted the big things, the muscular things. Economics he read, to give him insight into the nation and the individual. History, for it became under his train a vast colorful canvas—a procession of kings and queens, of gallant warriors, of potent cardinals, of shrewd statesmen. There must have been a great strain of chivalry in him. In the times of which he read, the days of tall lances and pawing chargers, he would have been one of those sturdy

captains of yeoman who won the knight's gilt spurs on the field of battle and rose eventually to dukedoms and to be kings' confidants.

And then an idea came to him with the force of an obsession. With the high chivalry and nobility of Europe, with the honest efficiency of America, why could not a race of merchant princes be bred that would make the name of the Anglo-Saxon race lustrous in the history of the world? The infusion of the straight, clean blood of the people into the veins of European nobility would rejuvenate it as rain rejuvenates a sun-parched plant. The ideals of the great families, their sense of honor, their keen perception of what a gentleman may and may not do, would cure the United States of its commercialism, as it were, by the serums of culture and of antiquity.

Of course few would agree to this, he said to himself, few would immediately; but after there were a few examples of it, opinion would change. It needed only a start. He was old, older than most men of his age, for gigantic labors and work at white heat had burned him out. If any one was to carry out his plan it must be Edna, and she must do it before he died. If Edna had been different he might have gone in peace, leaving his plans to her for fulfilment, with an easy mind. Bertha Krupp had carried on her father's work, but Edna was not a Bertha Krupp. And so he had arranged it; or, rather, Providence had arranged it for him.

The bishop rose. He was not very much disappointed, for though he had got nothing he had expected little. He had known Harbord's views, and it was only his faith in miracles that had prompted him to ask the ironmaster to subscribe money for the conversion of the Moros.

"But I have a mind, John Harbord," he said, "after your refusing to help my work, to refuse to marry your daughter."

"Oh, you won't do that," the ironmaster laughed.

"Why not?" the bishop asked.

"Because," Harbord replied, "in the first place you promised to do it, and you'll hardly break your word; and in the second, if you did I should have you kidnapped and brought to the church, bound, gagged, and manacled. People don't go back on what they say to me and get away with it."

II

Whatever Edna had inherited from her father of his tenacity, of his iron quality of will and soul; whatever from her mother of her placid wisdom, of her calm strength—all that had been nullified, neutralized, as it were, by the efforts of governesses, by boarding-schools in Europe, by foolish companionship, by pinchbeck ambitions.

Under a thirty seconds' scrutiny she passed the test favorably. She had something of her father's features—irregular, compelling. Her eyebrows were heavy cords of black hair. A faint down covered her upper lip. Her nose was large, her brow small. The slight tinge of purple in her lips suggested her bountiful flow of blood. Her chin seemed determined. But the more you looked, the less you discovered in her. She lacked a motif, a climax. She was an arch with the keystone missing. She was destined to drift along, not to cut into life as her father had.

"I'll tell you what's wrong with Edna Harbord," said a friend of her father once. He thought of her father as a great cannon bombarding the world. "She's a misfire."

Everything that her father had not had, that her mother had not had, was hers to take advantage of—education, luxury, associations. If her mother had been there to guide her, something might have been done, but she, poor lady, was dead when Edna was seven. All the ironmaster could do was to throw at the girl's back the weapon of his wealth. That obtained everything for her—governesses, schools, friends. But all they taught her was to run to form; to have a slim-ankled, expensively stockings foot; to have a sleek, expensively hatted head; to chatter small-talk; to appreciate musical comedy; to run a motor-car; to drink, with expressions of dismay and a pretty modesty, an occasional cocktail. She was well dressed, because she could not be otherwise. That helped her none. She was ugly.

That handicapped her where it was a question of love. At twenty-seven she was unmarried. If she had had one half of her mother's comeliness, if she had had one fourth of her father's will and magnetism, she would have been married eight years before. She had been too well chaperoned to see much of European men, so her wealth, her future wealth, did not get very much chance to exercise its attractions. And in the United States fortune-hunters, contrary to general assumption, are rare.

She had no great thrills in the present; no great pleasures. She took as little cognizance of the mighty things at work about her as a plant might, or a well-fed cat. They were part of the scheme, and she was part of it, and what was there to admire or to see? She had no doubts of the future and no confidence in it. In a word, she was content. She was mentally purblind.

"Very well indeed, thank you," she invariably answered when she was asked how she was feeling,

or whether she liked the sunset, or how her car was acting. Her words were the motto, the key, the criticism of her colorless life and soul.

She knew that her father planned a mighty future for her, that she was to be wedded to a great man, and the thought pleased her. She felt a mild thrill at the idea of being Countess or Duchess or Princess Somebody, but the man who was to come had no more life for her than the stock prince of a Hans Andersen tale.

So when Jean, Prince Sobieski, after a month's acquaintance informed her that he had her father's permission to ask her to marry him, she realized that the moment for which she had been prepared was present, and with a timidity that in another woman would have cloaked modesty or passion or affection, but in her denoted only embarrassment and awkwardness, she accepted him.

"Yes," she said awkwardly, and she nearly added "sir."

The Almanach de Gotha will tell you that his full name is Jean Armand Dieudonné Marie Joseph, Prince Sobieski; that he was born in Paris on the thirteenth of January, 18—; that he is the son of Casimir-Marc, Prince Sobieski. Its august pages now shelter the name of Edna May Harbord, who was born in Trenton in 18—. The marriage entry strikes you with a sense of shock.

If you have ever seen a picture of John III, King of Poland, you have a fair idea of what Jean, Prince Sobieski, looked like. They have both the same lean thinness, the same hatchet face with the deep-sunken brown eyes, nose like a Gascon's, mouth restrained at the corners, tumbling chestnut hair, jutting chin. They both impress you as sword blades. If you put their pictures side by side you will see a subtle differ-

ence. Generations of alliances with the princesses of Hapsburg have given the prince a shrewd, calculating look; the blood of the heiresses of Napoleon's nobility has taken away the spark of the Sobieski fire. You will notice a difference between the concentration of the king whose cares were the affairs of his kingdom, and the conception of the prince whose worries were his own depleted coffers and his pressing debts.

It would have made very little matter to him financially if Jean, Prince Sobieski, had let the roulette wheel and the race-track and the gambling-table alone; for the Sobieski coffers were well-nigh empty at any rate. There is but one virtue in cards: They give the necessary thrill, the sense of tactical skill and providential interference, the glory of the risking of life and death, to the man who, other things being equal, would be maneuvering with armies in the battle-field or riding a dynasty to prosperity or downfall. The same dashing fire that had sent John, King of Poland, to do battle with the Turks at Vienna was driving his descendant to the risk of rouge et noir, of vingt et un, of blooded horses mounted by diminutive jockeys. And the worst of it was that Sobieski was one of those gamblers who seem born to lose, against whom Fate plays an implacable hand.

There came the inevitable day when Rennenberg, the smiling little banker of Budapest, refused to give cash for Sobieski promises. There was nothing further to mortgage, nothing further to sell.

"The time has come, my prince," he said cynically, "for you to get married."

"I'm afraid it has," said Sobieski, simply.

It sounds very bad to those of us whose ancestors had not the misfortune to be kings. But, after all,

marriage is a question of limitations. A white man may not marry any woman not of his own color. A Hohenzollern must mate with a Bourbon or other ranking equally high, or a Hapsburg with a Romanoff. An impoverished prince must marry the daughter of a wealthy commoner. To people brought up within these limitations the matter is perfectly simple. There is nothing narrow or bigoted or selfish in it.

"I suppose you will go to America," said the banker.

"I suppose I had better," Sobieski nodded. He was cursing Fate, for there was a little Magyar countess, a brown, Gipsy-like, light-hearted woman . . . If things had only been different!

"You had better start out immediately," said Renenberg. "You can have five thousand francs a week until the marriage day."

So Jean, Prince Sobieski, came to America. He came ostensibly to shoot bear, and he proceeded to the Rockies, where he got some rather good pelts. There are certain conventions to be followed in hunting a fortune, exactly as there are in hunting a fox. Of the number of women eligible for his title he selected Edna Harbord, because in the first place it seemed as if she would not be very self-assertive in the bonds of matrimony, and in the second place, queerly enough, because her father attracted him.

"A fine old chap," Sobieski admitted. "The last man on earth I thought a title would dazzle. But you never can tell."

From the first he had captured old Harbord's imagination. To the ironmaster he was the flesh-and-blood embodiment of a great dream. There was something royal about Sobieski. Some one said that

the moment he entered a room you knew he was a prince. The trace of confidence in his walk as if he were one of those to whom the earth was subject; the high courtesy; the soft inflection of voice that denoted generations of noble ancestry; the quiet challenge of his brown eyes—all this, as it were, hall-marked his metal in the eyes of John Harbord.

And his name! His lineage! There came to the ironmaster's eyes a vision of John III routing the Cossack hordes from the plains of Little Poland; the Turks flying from Bessarabia; the election in Cracow, with a hundred thousand throats choosing Sobieski as their king; the old age devoted to statecraft and to the patronage of science and letters.

That was royalty, said old John Harbord. That was the royalty that America would one day see.

In Edna Harbord this imposing presence conjured up no visions, recalled no memories. She felt a sense of great awe before him, and not a little fear. She felt, as much as her small soul could feel, a sense of oppression and unreality when Sobieski slipped a ring on her finger.

They sat together, the old ironmaster and his daughter, on the night the engagement was arranged. They were dreaming, both of them—she of the respect her old friends would have for her when she was Princess Sobieska; he of a long line of mighty magnate princes with shoulders broad enough to carry the responsibilities of the world. A shadow flicked suddenly across his brow.

"Are you in love with him, Edna?" Harbord asked.

"Of course I am, Father," she answered. She had not felt the slightest desire to throw both arms about him or to press her lips to his, or any joy at

the prospect of having him for herself as her very own. But she understood that all people in love with each other married, and by some process of reasoning she arrived at the conclusion that all people to be married were in love. That was all she knew about it.

And these two, the ruined gamester and the spineless woman, these were the two whom the master of iron had chosen to fulfil the dream he had evolved from reading in books.

III

They had followed the ironmaster up so many turns of the circular iron stairway that Sobieski and Edna Harbord were becoming dizzy. They stepped out on the roof. It was warm and dark, and they had the sensation of being balanced in mid air, looking down on the world.

"Here we are," said the ironmaster. His voice was grave.

From where they stood—on the edge of space, as it were—they could see the town and iron-works, in a huddle of lights, parallelograms, squares, triangles, mapped out like a gigantic fireworks in white and yellow. Streets flowed like rivers. It had a sense of ugliness, of life, of an ant-hill. The light showed like an unsightly stain through the black. When they raised their heads they saw the stars vaguely through the yellow haze that hung about the town. The iron-works itself seemed like a thing apart, something grotesque, majestic. At regular intervals a sheet of red flame, from the gas exhaust, punched into the blackness and threw a satanic glare over the blackened building. There was a hoarse roar from it, as from some aroused animal. Below in the yard,

furnaces shot out arrows and javelins of dancing lights and showed the hunched figures of men rushing to and fro.

"All this," said the ironmaster, slowly, "belongs to me or is dependent on me. It will be dependent on you."

A feeling of awe came over Sobieski as he stood there. The great wall of the plant, the tall chimneys like watch-towers, the flinching red lights and the deep-blue shadows, the occasional figures scurrying through the yards, impressed him with a sense of power. It was as though this was a queer under-world kingdom, a kingdom of smoke and metal and flame, over which the shadow in the shadows of the roof ruled like a Pluto.

"And though it all is dependent on me," the old man said—he was choosing his words with care, as if pronouncing a defense for himself or a policy for the future, "although the profits come to me, I never take it that the men are working for me; they are working for themselves, and I for the men. I am more their servant than they are mine."

The flash of the gas exhaust illumined his face. Sobieski saw it was turned upward. He thought vaguely of one of the Assyrian priest-kings at prayer, with the flame of his sacrifice rising behind him. From below, the tang of molten iron plunged into water rose like a barbaric incense.

"If one of my workmen is ailing I take care of him until he can work again. If hard times come my men do not suffer. They give me honest work and I give them honest treatment. Of all the men in this place my responsibilities are heaviest. Do you understand me?"

"I think I do, sir," said Sobieski.

"Do you, Edna?"

"Yes, Father." The answer came glibly.

"To mete out justice according to the power that has been given you; to care for the weak; to work; to know the country, and to serve all mankind. That is what a man must do."

The great Nasmyth hammers below began clanking with steady, vibrating strokes. Derricks purred hoarsely. Engines puffed and spluttered. It seemed to Sobieski that after every sentence of the ironmaster the mighty machinery seemed to crash out a response, as though to a versicle.

"I built this works, layer by layer, with the labor of my head and hand. It's been my own kingdom on earth. I am going to leave it soon." He paused for a minute. "And you are going to carry it on."

Below in the darkness a group of men placed an anvil outside a door. A piece of glowing iron was held on it with tongs. A smith, stripped to the waist, took up his hammers and began battering it with swinging, grunting strokes. There was a coruscation of sparks.

"I want the work I started carried on. I want ore to be smelted and iron to be forged here in your life and in the life of your children. Will you carry it on?"

A vague fear began to trouble Sobieski. It was as though he were in the hands of enemies who were putting his soul to the test, ringing it to see whether it was true metal or metal that was false, striking with hammer strokes, forging it to another design. He wanted to get away.

"Promise me," the ironmaster asked solemnly. It was as though he were an ecclesiastic putting the vows of a sacrament.

"I will," said Sobieski.

The girl edged closer toward him. In the dim

blackness her white frock showed like a ghost. Sobieski did not feel her presence as he felt that of the old man. There was something cogent, something driving, in the ironmaster. Even his daughter seemed afraid of him.

"I want you to run this business as I have done it—for the people, for the country, for the sake of work, and not for money merely. Will you do that? Promise me!"

"I will," Sobieski replied.

"Will you take care of every one of those dependent on you? Will you see that every man has a square deal? Remember that the kingdom of the future is the big business plant. Will you look after your kingdom, take care of it, broaden it, pass it on to your sons after you? And they to their sons? Will you promise me?"

"I will."

"And you too, Edna? Promise me, too."

"I promise, Father."

The old man turned away. He was silent.

"I am satisfied," he said. "When I die it will still go on. It will be a monument and an example."

The three of them looked out on the yellow town. A splash of moonlight showed on the horizon and there was a mist rising, white, mysterious, in the distance. The noises of the great works became silent gradually, as the men turned to go home. Sobieski felt the girl coming closer to him, as if she were seeking the protection that marriage promised her against the solemnity of the abdication she was witnessing. Sobieski felt there were tears in the ironmaster's eyes.

"I am going below," said Harbord, abruptly. "Wait here a little while and think."

A sort of patronizing pity made the Pole stretch

his hand out and touch the girl's shoulder. She came closer to him. They looked into the night with awe.

"It's so ugly!" she broke out petulantly. "And so drab!"

"You are going off to Europe with me on Saturday, little dove," he said, "and you won't see this for a year." And little by little, as he talked to her, she forgot the deep shadows and the red flames and the yellow pattern of the lights of the town, and before her eyes there rose the sweep of the Bois de Boulogne, with the great arch in the distance; the clear, hard blue of the Riviera, and the varicolored race-track at Deauville, with the silk-jacketed jockeys flashing by toward the judges' stand.

IV

And so for one year life moved for them in a highly colored carnival, and Edna, Princess Sobieska, bathed in the prismatic shower like a naiad in a waterfall.

Marriage, after the first shock of novelty, became for her the same placid thing that her maidenly life had been. It was as though she had changed trains at a junction, and, in her new direction, was accompanied by more expensive and more elegant friends, moved through a more picturesque and mellow country, and was to have a fellow-traveler for the whole journey who by the grace of God was a prince of the earth, and who graciously permitted her to call him "Jean."

She began to care for him automatically—as though marriage had hypnotized her. There is a natural hypothesis that one loves one's husband. Her affection, love—whatever it was—for Sobieski was the result of autosuggestion. Another factor was

that Sobieski never gave her the least cause for regret, for grumbling, for hatred. He was naturally courteous, naturally chivalrous toward all women. Edna Harbord, the ironmaster's daughter, may have had no dignity, no standing, but the Princess Sobieska had—*ex officio*, so to speak—and he was the first to accord it to her.

Apart from this, as a common-sense proceeding why should one maltreat the goose that was to lay golden eggs?—going to, for as yet there was hardly the glimmer of the metal in the princely barnyard. Those matters were to be arranged when they returned from the honeymoon, so old John Harbord had said. Sobieski trusted him. It is only fair to Sobieski to say that his chivalrous attitude toward his American wife did not arise from her prospective millions. That much, at least, for the blood of kings. They went to Paris. They went to Warsaw, which is the most lifelike miniature of Paris ever painted. They went to Cracow, and visited the estates that once boasted of a Sobieski for a master—a broad, undulating plain like a map, with two high plateaus of oak trees, great dots of blue-green; a river zig-zagging crazily through it, like a lizard making for cover; two dun villages like birds' nests.

"And you are going to reign over this soon," Sobieski said to her; "you are going to be the lady of the great house, the little mother of the people." And he watched her carefully through his shrewd gambler's eyes.

"Oh, how wonderful!" she murmured.

For a moment she thought of the drab iron-works across the water, the red flame and blue shadows of it, the tang of hissing iron. She remembered the high, solemn moment on the parapet of the works; but she flicked it out of her mind as one flicks away

an impertinent fly. And Sobieski, seeing all this, smiled.

At Paris they met Bugnot de Bounode, the Gascon journalist with the green cat's eyes and the cat's mustache.

"America," he began viciously, "is like a grocer's warehouse, since you ask me what I think." She had not, but Sobieski, the cunning devil, had. "Tin cans to be sold for tin money. Gray, deserted, morose, an indefinably evil smell. Hysteria of work. Hysteria of amusement. Bad form. Very bad form!"

He paused and looked about him. Sobieski grinned.

"I will take New York, for example. It looks as if it had been flung together by a jerry-builder. Oh yes, there are exceptional houses, I admit. But in the main. Built higher. There's more money in it. Everything suggests money, suggests shopkeeping. Even the names of the streets. Fifth Avenue—fifty dollars. Forty-second Street—forty-two cents. Bad form! Very bad form!"

He smiled his slow Gascon smile, which people who knew him distrusted more than his acid, stinging tongue.

"Even your superlative grace and charm, my princess—" he chuckled inwardly—"much guilt though it may remove, cannot cover up the sordid, shameful ugliness of it."

Sobieski rose and stood beside his wife.

"We are taking her away, *mon ami*," he said blandly, "and there will be nothing left to redeem it."

And, little by little, Edna, Princess Sobieska, began to react to a sensation of shame. Everybody seemed to say or to hint the same thing, or to keep silent, with a friendly tolerance that suggested more than the most biting words. She had once seen the

workmen at the iron-plant paid off on a Saturday morning—a crew of blue-jumpered, grease-marked hard-faced athletes taking piles of green bills and dirty silver through a window in a shabby wooden box. She considered it interesting at the time. There was a feeling of pride in the idea of handing out their bread and butter to those grim, iron-bodied men; but now she remembered it with a feeling of shocked shame, with a sense of ignobility, as though she had been connected with the keeping of a pawnshop or the sale of second-hand rags.

In the attitude of every one she met she sensed a covert insult. The European pauper, it seemed to her, looked on her wealth as a social leprosy. The huckster's coin, they seemed to sneer! And she took it all with a shamed head. She might have turned on them and told of the epics of great manufacturers. She might have told them of her own father, who was the servant of his people, whose ideals were the ideals of a great poet, whose actions were the actions of a good king. She might have told them of the solemn vow on the parapet of the iron-works. She might, if she had been a strong woman, if she had been in soul her father's daughter, have reduced them to shamed silence, to a humming admiration. Ah yes, but if she had been in soul her father's daughter, if she had had his iron in her eye, they would never have spoken to her as they did. And Sobieski would never have smiled.

October had come round again. The red moon was rising. Already they were about to return to New York. The year's honeymoon, for which Harbord had paid royally, was at an end. The ironmaster wanted them home. From the balcony of their hotel they could see Paris like a vast lyric poem, a thing of silver and faint blue.

"The old Sobieski house on the Rue de Ponthieu," Sobieski said easily, "they will sell it to us, Edna. I want you to have a look at it to-morrow."

"But, Jean . . ." she said. She flushed with embarrassment.

"Yes?" He waited.

"A house here; and the castle at Cracow! You remember Father wanted us to live over in New York. He doesn't want us away from the works."

"I think we can attend to that," Sobieski laughed confidently. He threw his cigarette into the street. He watched it as it fell in a straight red line.

"Your father, Edna," he continued, "is a trifle old-fashioned and doesn't understand these things. He's a fine old chap, best in the world, but his horizon is limited. We must make him see, you and I, that all that's out of the question."

He paused for a moment and watched her surreptitiously. She drank in his words with her eyes fixed hypnotically on the laughing streets below.

"There are my people in Poland to whom we owe a duty," he said, "and we've got our duty to society here, also."

"Yes," she nodded. "Of course," she added in a second.

"We have got to make him understand, and you've got to help me do it, Edna."

He threw his hand out in one of his occasional wide gestures.

"This is the place to live. You can't live by the works. It would be like living in a shop."

"That's right," she agreed.

"You'll help me explain to him, Edna? You understand?"

"Of course I will," she said. "The idea was ridiculous. We'll make him see that."

V

There is a personality of towns as well as a personality of people. There are towns that are vacuous; towns that are alert; towns that are prim; towns that are lazy. Perhaps it is only that the spirit of the population filtrates into the stone and mortar as it does into their own bone and muscle. Perhaps it is something else. The Romans had a "genius of the place" to explain it. At any rate, Leonardsville is strong, dependable, serious. You see that in the quiet strength of the houses, in the firmly paved streets. There is nothing pinchbeck about it, nothing frivolous. It has an object in life. The stores go in for no meretricious advertising. The dwellings are mellow. There is the right admixture of shadow to light. There is no space wasted. There is no crowding. Where trees are wanted trees grow. But you can give it no name suggestive of its model quality. It stands for no cheap label. It is Leonardsville.

At one end of it—in the south, to be exact—the iron-works stands out like a fortress, a fortress that is continually in action, for from the dun buildings surrounded by the great walls there is the flash and roar of exhausts, the throbbing of mammoth hammers, the vague thunder of furnaces. You pass from the roadway, which is full of ruts, into a courtyard, elaborately cobbled and scrupulously clean, through a huge iron gate. Here and there are piles of nuts and bolts, like ammunition stacked against an attack; iron casks of water; an occasional anvil; parts of engines laid in the court on their way to or from the foundry.

Three times a week John Harbord came to the works—Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The

other days he spent in New York, visiting occasionally at the Church Street office. When it was fine he came in his car, for he enjoyed the fresh air pouring into his face on his hour-and-a-half drive. With a quick, firm step he jumped down and went into his office. You might have taken him for a man in his prime if you had not noticed the shell-like arteries on his hands.

He swung into the little office in the rolling-mill, wished every one "Good morning," with a curtness that no one misunderstood, and rang his bell for the reports.

But on this Monday morning he was not curt, he was expansive. Miss Ertle—the calm, finely built woman of forty who was his secretary and who knew as much about steel as an artillery officer—permitted herself the luxury of smiling as he came in. Brennan, the square-faced assistant manager, relaxed the tenseness of his customary frown.

"Ah, the desk has come!" said the ironmaster.

In the cluttered, dingy brown office, which years of use had worn to a faint brown, the great shining mahogany table, glass-topped, and the swivel-chair struck a note that jarred. It was an opulent, a royal piece of furniture, worthy even of the augustness of the Sobieski name. The ironmaster examined it with attentive care, as though it were a piece of complicated machinery. He passed his hand appreciatively over the glass.

"He ought to be able to work well there—eh, Brennan? Eh, Miss Ertle?"

Brennan smiled in answer, the smile of the master mechanic who accepts no statement until it has been proved, a doubting, reserved smile; Miss Ertle a little sadly, the smile of a woman of forty who

understands all the pathos and disappointment of this world.

John Harbord could hardly tear himself away from the desk. He sat down in the chair and looked out through the two windows in front of it on the stretch of green meadows in the distance. He looked with an expression of regret at the pillar of wall that divided the windows from each other. He had bought, from a dealer whom he had instructed to search for it, a steel engraving of the third John, King of the Poles. He would have liked to hang it in that place for Sobieski to look at, and to be, as it were, inflamed by. But he judged—and quite rightly, too—that it would be something out of place. He had an innate sense of delicacy, had old John Harbord. That portrait would have thrilled his romantic soul. He rose with a laugh, a little shamefaced.

“That’ll be all right,” he said curtly.

Brennan swung round on his chair. One look at Brennan and you knew what he was. He had a square, determined jaw; black gimlet eyes; the hard face of a mathematician; the two perpendicular furrows between the eyebrows that denote concentrated thought. You could see immediately that he was a workman who was also a college graduate. The experience in his eyes placed him in the late thirties. He was afraid of no man and expected no man to be afraid of him.

“When is he coming to work?” Brennan demanded in his direct, metallic manner.

“We mustn’t rush him to it too quickly,” Harbord smiled. “They’ll be home to-morrow. We’ll make a start in about a week.”

“You want me to coach him up in the work?”

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"We'll do it together, Will. You'll have to do most of it; I'm getting too old and I want to rest." The ironmaster drew a sheaf of letters toward him and Miss Ertle took out her pencil and stenographer's pad. Brennan still looked at the ironmaster, with the furrows in his forehead standing out like ridges.

"I'll coach him all right," Brennan snapped, "only . . ." He swung about to his desk.

"Only what?" Harbord asked.

"Oh, nothing," Brennan answered.

The ironmaster chuckled.

"You'll have to look out for your laurels, Will," he laughed.

They both looked at him, the assistant manager and the secretary, with a little sadness in their eyes, the fear of disappointments and disillusionments from which even their loyalty and affection could not shield him. They had each understood John Harbord's idea, and they had each turned it over in their minds night after night and day after day, viewing it from all angles. The glamour of romance and high purpose had not blinded their eyes. They found no virtue in his plan—Brennan, because he distrusted theories and knew iron and men; Miss Ertle, because she was a woman of forty, and accordingly wise.

VI

It cut Sobieski's heart a little to see the delight of the ironmaster on their return. He knew what was in John Harbord's mind, and he shrank from smashing the man's illusions—Sobieski was not a bad soul at bottom, and he knew how it would hurt. It is cruel enough to take something away from a child, but it is infinitely more cruel to take it from an old man

whose days are numbered. In Sobieski's hard philosophy it was every man for himself. He believed that the old man's ideals were, to say the least, quixotically foolish. It was the fault of his surroundings. And, besides, it would be quite possible, he felt, to arrange a sort of compromise for the present. He wanted to get back to Europe quickly, he wanted to spend the winter in Paris, and this stay in New York was an irksome experience to him. To Edna it was a rough waking hour between golden dreams. Sobieski had decided to wait patiently a little while, but every hour he became more and more eager to bring the matter to a definite conclusion.

They had been at home four days. A flurry of calls, shopping, engagements, theater had occupied them until now, but the rush had become too much for Edna—she expected her child to be born in January—and they had stayed at home that Thursday evening. It was the first time since their arrival that they had had a chance to discuss things with the ironmaster. They sat together in the warmly lighted drawing-room, a miracle of interior decoration in mellow gold and rose, which old John Harbord had spoiled by filling with the things he liked: with pictures in live color, steel engravings of his favorite heroes, huge cushioned arm-chairs, books scattered everywhere, an address presented to him by the men.

These things jarred Edna. They had made her mother, who had more taste than she, supremely happy.

John Harbord settled himself in his easy-chair and watched the yellow flame play over the log in the grate. He was happy—one glance at his face would show that. Edna sat at the piano, picking out with difficulty an air from a current comedy. Sobieski

moved uneasily about the room, taking up books, putting them down, looking at engravings. There was a restless fire in his brown eyes and in the toss of his tawny hair. His elaborate, angular evening clothes stood out in sharp contrast to the baggy dinner-jacket and black tie of the ironmaster.

"We've got a desk for you down there already," Harbord broke in irrelevantly. He was permitting a flash of his own thoughts to escape him unconsciously. Sobieski stiffened. Edna stopped playing and looked at him. The moment had come. Sobieski leaned forward and picked up a book.

"That's awfully good of you," he observed. "It'll be a good thing to have when I run down occasionally."

The ironmaster laughed.

"You are not going to run down occasionally. You are going to work there every day. I'm going to start you next Monday."

Sobieski's detached interest showed in his face. Underneath his carefully tailored clothes his body was rigid and tense.

"That's hardly possible," he said. "We'll be leaving for Europe in November."

The ironmaster stood up. His face was set in serious lines.

"I understood," he began, "that you were going to handle the works after I was gone, on the lines I laid down to you."

"That's ridiculous, Father," Edna broke in. "You can't expect—"

She stopped suddenly. She felt as she often felt when an electric storm was coming up on the horizon—a sense of fear, an agitation, a suspense waiting for the vast atmospheric masses to crash together

and lightning to cleave downward. Sobieski was speaking; his voice was as suave as when passing a compliment.

"Of course I understand it," he was saying; "but I can't be expected to look after the details. Managers can do that. In a broad sense—"

"I expect you to look after everything," Harbord thundered. A shadow, like a liquid stain, was passing over his face. His eyes shot beams of steel light. "I expect you to work for your living like every one else in the plant."

The time had come, Sobieski thought, to be direct and forceful, to show himself master of the situation.

"That's out of the question," he snapped curtly.

John Harbord looked at him for a long minute. The expression of forcefulness passed from his face, and in place of it there came the look of a man who is trying to grasp something, trying to understand. Then suddenly, so suddenly and unexpectedly that his daughter and Sobieski took a step forward as if they feared collapse, he went weak. His knees trembled and his eyes became blank, and little drops of perspiration stood out on his head. He reached for the back of a chair.

"I'm all right," he said shortly.

Sobieski walked toward him. His tone was conciliating.

"And then, *mon beau-père*," he said easily, "there's Edna's child. We want him to be born in Poland, or in the old family house in Paris whose foundations are on Polish earth. We must go over. He can't be born anywhere else. He's a Sobieski."

"He's not a Harbord," said the ironmaster.

They were all silent for a moment.

"Now, don't you see?" Sobieski made a little ap-

peeling gesture with his hands, as though he were advocating common sense. Edna broke in.

"Don't you see, Father?" she seconded.

The ironmaster nodded weakly.

"Yes, I see," he said.

He walked toward the door slowly. They made no effort to stop him. They both sensed that he had been hit hard and had best be left alone. Half-way to the hall he stopped.

"I suppose you'll be wanting some money," he observed.

Sobieski winced and walked toward the fire. He did not want to talk about it. The old man, he felt, should be more tactful. He said nothing.

"I see," the ironmaster repeated. He left the room.

He made his way upstairs to the big, comfortable bedroom that had been Anne Harbord's and his, and he sat down, trying to understand what had happened. It seemed to him that the cold, wintry gale of fate was blowing and he standing naked and defenseless before it, when before he had been enjoying the odorous warmth of a spring day. They had gone back on him. They had committed the unspeakable evil of treachery. His whole life he had given over to a work, and now, with quitting-time at hand, he saw it gone for nothing. The temple he had reared to his high god they were for using as a house of revels. And he was old and could not build again.

He understood Sobieski now. One glint of the Pole's eyes had told him as much as though he had seen a weapon. The Pole had no sympathies with his ideals, no understanding, no intention of carrying them out. He had given his prince's blood for the plebeian's money, and now he wanted the consummation of the bargain. But the ironmaster had been

no party to it; he had seen things differently. There was no moral obligation on him to pay.

He looked at the matter again, because he wanted to do justice to everybody as well as to himself and his people. Sobieski wanted his son to be born a Pole. He could understand that. But was it true? And he decided bitterly it was not. It was merely an argument, brazen in its injustice, for John Harbord wanted Edna's son to be born in the Harbord house under the glamour of the Harbord dream. Why, he reflected bitterly, he would even have to buy the Pole's house for the child to be born in! They wanted his money, his property, he knew now—this Pole, who had no claim on it beyond marrying his daughter, and his daughter, who had inherited nothing of him or of Anne Harbord. They wanted to take it away, to spend it in Paris, in Warsaw, in Baden-Baden—anywhere except in the place it was made. They had no right to it. What of the people by whose panting lungs and tired muscles it had been made, for whom John Harbord felt he held it in trust? What of them? he asked fiercely. What of them?

Suddenly, with a great throb of poignancy, he realized how old he was, and how helpless. What could he do against them? Should he go back to the drawing-room and plead? That would not do, he decided, willing though he was to sacrifice his dignity for his dream. He had seen that determined glint in Sobieski's eyes and he knew nothing was of use against it. He could threaten, and browbeat, and possibly reduce them to terms; but after he was dead, what was to hold them back? The thought of Edna filled him with a spasm of rage, and he cursed her violently, forgetting himself for the moment. She had committed the unpardonable sin. She had committed parricide. It was no use pleading with them,

threatening them, coercing them. That was no good, he said over and over again hopelessly. That was no good. No. No good at all.

Down in the drawing-room Sobieski leaned on the mantel and gazed into the fire.

"It hit the old gentleman hard," he said, and he was sorry for him. "It hit him hard. But I never thought he would give in so quickly."

VII

They had heard nothing of the ironmaster for a week, when Sobieski got a brief message to bring his wife to the works on Saturday at noon. They knew he was at his club in the evenings and in the daytime at the Leonardsville plant, but Sobieski was becoming worried. He was afraid he would have to search for him and reopen the issue; but the message reassured them. It was typical of the old man to request them to come to the iron-works. He felt more at home there than in his house on Madison Avenue, certainly more so than in the shining office on Church Street. Perhaps, Sobieski thought, he was going to argue with them, to try to persuade his son-in-law to follow his plans, as he had done once before solemnly in the shadow of the plant. More likely he was going to hand over everything to Edna: it would be there he would like to transact such business.

"I wish he wouldn't drag us down there every time he feels like it," Edna was grumbling. A hard frost had been out and the hoar still lay in minute crystals along the country-side. The tires of the car crunched as they ground into the road.

"That's all right," Sobieski said lightly. He could afford to meet a few of the old man's whims. He whistled lightly as they spun along.

They drew up before the great gate of the courtyard and Sobieski saw with surprise that it was full of workmen. They milled like cattle in the small inclosure. They watched Sokieski and Edna Harbord with independent stares as the two made their way through the yard, but paid little attention to them. The men were talking, arguing excitedly, making free gestures. Their voices rose like the hum of a mill. Their dark, grimy features and muscled shoulders suggested that all the concentrated mental and physical strength of the town was gathered there. From their jumpers came the heavy tang of oil and the hard taste of metal. What were they doing there, Sobieski asked himself suddenly, when they should have been working? Their presence disturbed him. It disturbed his wife too.

"Jean!" she said suddenly. "He's dead!"

Sobieski's heart gave a jump. The old man had killed himself; he had killed himself because his child and her husband had betrayed him. Sobieski tore the office door open with a hand that shook. No, he was wrong, thank God! John Harbord was there. But was everything all right?

The long table that was to have been his desk had been shifted to the center of the floor, and about it sat several people, as though at a directors' meeting. At its head was John Harbord, proud, exultant, it seemed, a faint red flush on his cheeks showing up dramatically against the silvering black of his hair and beard. Beside him sat Brennan, the grim assistant manager of the works, and a little farther down Miss Ertle sat, busy with a paper covered with the hooks and angles of shorthand. There were other men there—workmen of the expert type, with the light of inspiration playing over their sharp features, and others, manifestly executives by their

heavy jowls and grave eyes. Opposite each other, toward the end, Sobieski saw the brown Vandyke and eagle nose of a famous surgeon and the chiseled features of the Bishop of Utica. The quick hum of the workmen's conversation outside came to them like the buzz of a power-house.

"Come here, Edna," Harbord said.

He raised a packet of papers. He was ignoring Sobieski. The pair of them advanced to the bottom of the table, and stood there, feeling like prisoners before a bar of justice. As he looked at the men present Sobieski saw that they were laboring under some form of emotion. Their eyes were glistening and their hands fidgeted. Occasionally they raised their heads, and a sort of dumb admiration passed over their faces as they looked at John Harbord. Sobieski tried to concentrate his thoughts, to understand what the scene meant, but the hum outside, now broken often by an unrestrained cheer, distracted him.

"Here is your money, Edna," Harbord was saying evenly, "bonds, mortgages, and shares—eighteen thousand dollars, money your mother saved and earned by investment. It will bring you in about twenty dollars a week, and you can't realize on the capital. That is all."

She looked at the papers in a dumb, blind sort of way. It was evident she did not understand. Sobieski would have to ask for an explanation. He felt hot with the shame of it all. Harbord was looking at him keenly. He felt the eyes of the physician and the ecclesiastic inject acid into his skin.

"But I don't understand," he said. "My wife doesn't understand."

"That is all the money she has in the world," Harbord explained; "twenty dollars a week. I am giving it to her."

"But this is ridiculous," Sobieski snapped. He turned away. "Why all the comedy?" His teeth bit his lips. He was savage at what he thought to be light, melodramatic revenge of the ironmaster, the shaming of him before these strangers.

"There are many women in this town, Sobieski," the ironmaster replied, "who handle large families on less. Edna is no better than they are. At any rate, she has all she can get from me. I have none to give."

The bishop looked at Harbord with his eyes pursed. The manager was grave. The secretary looked up with moist and shining eyes. The doctor smiled grimly in his beard. But there was purpose beneath all their looks. Had it not been for the dingy office, with its glaring lithographed calendars, its dog-eared reference books, its chipped yellow furniture, its iron copying press, the group at the table might have been statesmen in a capital founding a new dynasty.

Sobieski looked through the window at the silvered country-side without. It seemed cold and forbidding, grim, relentless, an enemy that gives and expects no quarter. Sobieski blazed into sudden passion. His wife looked at him with a face that had gone white as lime.

"You are mad!" he stormed. "You are raving!"

The physician raised his eyes. They were slightly amused. They gave Sobieski the sense of cold insult.

"You can do nothing on that score, young man," he said cynically. "He is sane, quite sane."

Outside the hum of the workmen rose to a clamor.

"Bring him out!" they were shouting. "Old John! We want Old John!"

Harbord rose. He put his hands on the table. He leaned forward.

"Jean," he said solemnly, "I offered you everything. You have had your chance. You lost it." His brows knit together. His jaw tightened. "One year ago I told you what I wanted you and Edna to do. I wanted you to take care of my people—I wanted some one to look after them when I was gone. You promised me you would. You refused a week ago."

The humming outside rose and fell in great sound-waves that resembled the incoming of a spring tide. At times the ticking of the old yellow clock on the wall was distinct. Again sound buffeted the windows and doors like a high wind.

Above it all the voice of the ironmaster rose high and distinct, with the clear ring of fine metal:

"You want money. I have no money. The money I had was by virtue of my position. I had the use of it. So would you have had. But it belongs to neither of us. Providence and the work of the men below put it in my hands. It was there to care for them if times became bad—to give them work if there was no work."

Somebody without was addressing the men in brazen accents that seemed like the bass to the old man's tones. The crowd roared like near thunder.

"But you would have taken it and spent it on fine houses and on fast horses. You would have spent it abroad. There was no warmth in your heart for my people, no understanding." He paused for a moment. "I gave it back to them," he concluded simply.

"You gave it back?"

Sobieski looked dazed. It was as if Harbord had announced himself as saviour of the world. The listeners at the table were like carven figures.

"I gave it to them to build hospitals for themselves, to build libraries, to give college scholarships to their sons, to manage themselves under the

trustees. They will get higher wages—not much, but enough for more happiness and comfort. They at least will not misuse it. They know how hard it is to get.”

A foreman mechanic slipped through the door. He fumbled with his cap.

“The men want you, Mr. Harbord,” he spoke. “They want to thank you. You can hear them calling.”

There was a vast tramping of feet outside in the yard.

“Speech!” they were shouting. “Speech! Speech from Old Iron!”

“I’ll be out in a minute, Cameron,” he answered. “That’s all,” he finished simply. He took his hat, brushed it carefully, and prepared to go out. “I am going to say good-by to my people,” he told them; “and then I am going to rest until my time’s here.”

A great sense of shame and degradation swept over Sobieski as he stood there. It seemed to him that before all these people, before the whole world, he had been stripped to the leanness of his soul. He had been shown forth as selfish, as treacherous, as base.

To-morrow the news would go sweeping through the capitals of Europe that the plebeian ironmaster had disinherited his princely son-in-law. What would people think? he asked. They would probably think right.

A new flush mounted to his cheeks, and with unseeing eyes he looked at Edna Harbord’s white face. The ironmaster passed by. She took a step forward.

“Father!” she gasped.

The ironmaster swung about to her. His face grew pale.

“Ah, Edna,” he said slowly, “if you had called on

your father for help when they were betraying him, it would be different to-day."

He left the room. The others sat about the table as if turned to stone. Suddenly the bishop rose. He murmured something. Sobieski thought he was condoling with him.

"What did you say?" he asked, looking sharply at the bishop.

The bishop's eyes were like ice. His voice cut.

"I was quoting of Tyre," he said. His voice rang out true and proud: "Of 'Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth.'"

A vast explosion of voices told them that the iron-master had stepped out among his people. They swung out in a rushing current of sound, billowing, swelling, rising as a pillar, like some mighty organ playing a Gloria.

V

A BREVITY ON PAGE THREE

THE tall rewrite man with the dainty manner and the horn-rimmed spectacles strode from the telephone booth to the cluttered city desk.

"O'Hagan, over in Brooklyn," he reported tersely. "Story of an Italian suicide in the East River. Assistant in a wine-shop."

The fat city editor thought for an instant.

"Nothing to it?" he asked.

"Nothing to it," the rewrite man grimaced contemptuously.

"Oh, well. Stick it in the Brevities, on page three."

I

In spite of his fear of his brother and of his brother's surliness; in spite of his being in a strange country; in spite of the lowness of his wages—of the whole three months he had spent assisting his brother in the wine-shop on Columbia Street—there had hardly been a moment in which he had not been supremely happy.

Northward Columbia Street rambles from the Erie Basin toward Brooklyn Bridge, a strange, unkempt street, a sailors' highway. Grotesque shops dot its walls from terminal to terminal: mariners' outfitters, their windows piled high with rubber boots and shirts and sheath-knives; queer delicatessen

stores with loads of unheard of delicacies in their windows, dried fish from Iceland, sticky Turkish sweetmeats, onions beaded on strings; photographers, with models of full-rigged ships in their windows; a cigar store with the battered figurehead of some forgotten wind-jammer nailed to the wall in lieu of an Indian. Up and down the street go the motley population of the ships—Norwegians; tanned suspicious Lascars jabbering in a weird tongue; small, timid Portuguese sailors; laughing negroes from Norfolk schooners; Chinese with their slant eyes. A queer polyglot highway it is and a dull and drab one, whose only light spot is the shop called "Feretti—Wines."

He stood at the door and looked up and down the street. A passing stevedore hailed him.

"Hello, Pete; where's your brother to-day?"

Pietro's teeth flashed smilingly. His eyes glimmered recognition.

"He's down at the Booth Pier," he answered in his halting English.

"He ought to take a jump off it some day," the stevedore growled, "before somebody pushes him in."

There are many men hated on Columbia Street. There is, for example, Ed Shuhmann, the sly saloon-keeper, who can wheedle their money from the sailors with the adroitness of a pickpocket. There is "Spooner" Jones, the slave-driving pier superintendent of the Gallagher and Burton Line. There is the policeman Flannagan, who is free with night-stick and black-jack. There is good and solid reason for hating these men—they have earned it—but there is no concrete cause for hating Vincenzo Feretti, owner of "Feretti—Wines." He is just one of those per-

sons against whom one takes an intense dislike and keeps it until one's dying day.

"I don't know what's wrong with that guinea," Riordan, the fat patrolman of the beat, would say to himself. "He's never done anything. His shop's on the level. But nobody likes him, and I don't care for him, myself."

He still has his wine-shop on Columbia Street, has Vincenzo Feretti, and he is little changed since the days when Pietro, his short, round-faced, smiling brother helped him pour out Chianti for customers, or wrap up bottles of sherry and port and potent liquors for home consumption, as the technical phrase is. Tall, spare, yellow in the face, with prominent cheek-bones and a flowing mustache black as ink, his eyes still regard you with that suspicious, alert, and menacing look that is like a challenge. A man in whose debt I should not care to be, or by whom I should not care to be caught in the commission of crime. A merciless and selfish man and a miser to his finger-tips.

"I wonder why people go into his place, if they don't like him," Riordan used to philosophize.

Riordan had time for philosophy, being a patrolman on beat, but had little ability for arriving at conclusions, having few brains, no matter how his heart is. A clean and cozy place was Feretti's, with its sawdust on the floor; its red stove; its shelves lined with bottles; its little cashier's grille. A place where the solid burgesses of Columbia Street like to forgather for a glass of wine, a chat, and a game of cards; in preference to the sailors' boozing dens of the neighborhood, riotous with liquor and hoarse chant-eyes, and where sheath-knives flash too often. And it was more than cozy and clean when Vincenzo Feretti,

seeing his clients grow and multiply, wrote home to Naples for his brother Pietro to come out and assist him. When Pietro came the wine-shop took on an air of cheer and cordiality.

"You will have your room and board and three dollars a week—a big salary," Vincenzo had written.

By now Pietro knew the truth as to the largeness of the salary, but he enjoyed his new place. There was a sense of hospitality in the work that pleased him, and he enjoyed making friends and putting an occasional word in the conversation. In the daytime, when custom was slack, he loved to stand at the door and watch the passing current of sailormen and stevedores up and down the street, and to exchange a phrase with friends and acquaintances. His smile would beam out like sunrise. In his voice there would be a happy little chuckle.

"He's the regular little Happy Kid, Pete is," the Columbia Street folks would say. "One good little scout." And into their faces, as they thought of him, there would steal a pleasant smile of remembrance, such as comes into the eyes at the memory of happy days past, or the prospect of pleasant things to come.

II

In Leghorn he had been happy, in spite of the things wrong at home. There was his father, a grim old Garibaldian, truculent, savage; his mother, an evil, envious woman, with her eternal Calabrian sneer; and, before he had gone to America, there had been Vincenzo, saturnine, suspicious, miserly, self-centered. Pietro, in that family, seemed like a sun bursting through clouds. In the house Pietro was subdued, but in the hat factory, where he plaited straw hats for a pittance, he was the merriest of the

workmen. As he walked through the streets the children playing on the church steps used to hail him with high-pitched voices.

"*Buon giorno, Pietro. Ohe', buon giorno.*"

"*Buon giorno, bambini,*" he would cry back.

Even the old men basking in the sun—immobile, waiting for death—had a word for him as he passed by. And the brown-faced Livornian women smiled innocently and merrily toward him.

"He has not an enemy in the world," all would say of him. "The friend of every one!"

He had great pride in that phrase, "the friend of every one." It seemed a great distinction, greater than the honors of kings. He felt as though he wanted to embrace the whole world in his arms, to feel that at the sight of him dour men would lose their grimness and sad women smile once more. And when the letter from Brooklyn came, it was this feeling that he wanted to embark on a new continent, to greet every one with a smile and to be so greeted by them, that consoled him for leaving his friends in Leghorn. The fellow-workmen of the hat factory gathered about him as he went.

"But aren't you afraid, Pietro?" they suggested. "Won't you feel lost? *Ecco*, a large country: gunmen; thieves; Indians; Irishmen. *Ebbene!*"

"*Ma che,*" he smiled. "None hurts any one but who hurts them. None meddles with me. *Ecco!* I am the friend of every one."

And in that dour and straggling street, where things are done that never see the light of day, where theft is a common thing, and men brawl to the death, where the sandbagger still works, and where deadly sleep-compelling drops are still slipped into the liquors of sailor folk—even there Pietro Feretti found he had not an enemy in the world. There was,

for example, Benjamin Sulsberg, who, it was whispered, aided by a sniff of cocaine, a taxicab, and an automatic pistol, would kill any man in New York for a ten-dollar bill. He always nodded a curt greeting to the little Italian in passing, relaxing his ever vigilant eyes for an instant in order to smile.

There was Riordan, policeman of the beat, who would stop to bandy words. Riordan was the humorist of the precinct.

"Look here, Pete," he would state with mock solemnity, "you ain't looking so well. Sort of down in the mouth, sallow and joyless. No fun in life for you. You ought to see a doctor."

"See a doctor!" Pietro would explode with laughter. And Riordan would pass along, chuckling.

There was even Ed Shuhmann, he with the evil reputation and the evil saloon—taciturn, sullen—even he melted under the smile of the Livornian.

"How is it by you, kid?" he would inquire. "How do you like Brooklyn?"

"Fine place, sure," Pietro would answer. "Like it. Nice place."

"I've seen worse," Shuhmann would nod as he went along. And so Ed had. He had seen Sing Sing.

But one person did not respond to Pietro's smiling affability, and that was Vincenzo, the elder Feretti. Perhaps it was the difference of fifteen years in their ages—Vincenzo was forty now. Partly it was the grimness of the man's character. Certainly his miserliness helped, too.

"You're my brother, *ecco!* Very good!" he was never tired of telling the younger man. "I treat you all right. I give you nice place, fine wages. Eh? Everything fine."

Pietro would nod his response.

"But listen to me." Vincenzo's face would grow

harder than ever, his eyes cold, his lips contracted. "You not treat me right, you let my money go wrong, you take one cent from the till—one cent, see?—you go to jail. My brother? No matter. I treat you like I treat a burglar. Jail!"

And with that he would make a downward turn of his thumb, more cruelly decisive even than his words.

III

If this story should reach the eyes of John Fitzgerald, heavy-weight boxer, known to ring-men as the "Gowanus Cyclone," it will clear up a mystery which has puzzled him not a little. In the ring Fitzgerald—if he will pardon my saying so—is a fair third-rater; he might be in the first rank if he had skill combined with his courage and build. In appearance the Cyclone is not prepossessing. Tall and bulky, square in the head, his face marred by a hundred fights. His ears are battered and his nose broken. He has the hard, vigilant eye of the professional heavy-weight. The knuckles of his gigantic hands are distorted and swollen. And when he smiles there is something cynical and lowering about his features, though he does not mean it, that gives one the impression he is about to land viciously with both fists.

Perhaps it was the admiration of the timid for the strong, perhaps it was vainglory in his friendship with a boxer, but I prefer to think it was the sheer emanation of his good-will toward all men that drew Pietro Feretti to him who is called the "Gowanus Cyclone." At any rate, it was that drew the Gowanus Cyclone toward Pietro. Fitzgerald was ranging his airy way down Columbia Street when the smile

of the little Italian stopped him in mid-course.

"Well, who have we got here?" the Cyclone roared. "Little Sunshine. If it ain't, you can slap me in the chops."

Pietro smiled more brilliantly than ever. The sinister smile might have scared him, but the tone of voice presaged nothing but friendship.

"You're all right, fellow," Fitzgerald told him. "Take it from me, buddy, you're all right."

And so it had gone on from day to day. There was always a smile and a word from Fitzgerald for the wine-dealer and always a smile and a word back.

Came a day when Fitzgerald stopped before his friend. He put his hand in his hip pocket and brought out a piece of cardboard.

"Come up to-night and see me fight, kid," he invited. "It'll be some bout, believe me."

So, dressed in his gala garments, such as he wore on Sunday or on the feast-day of a saint, Pietro Feretti left his accustomed Columbia Street to explore the strange fastnesses of East New York—a weird, unknown place of apartment-houses and clean shops, of sturdy children playing in the streets, of complacent matrons sitting placidly in the sun, of guttural Hebrew jargon and of keen-ey3d Hebrew men. Strange were all these things to Pietro Feretti, and stranger still the sporting club, with its ring blue beneath the arc-lamp, its wooden benches and blaring band.

He had been late leaving the store and he arrived the moment Fitzgerald climbed into the ring, followed by another as big as he. Pietro shuddered a little at the sight of the huge figures, naked except for the fighting shorts, the shoes, and the inadequate brown gloves.

The clang of a gong and the Cyclone sprang in,

his face twisted in its malignant smile. There was the thud of the Cyclone's right fist to the jaw and the crash of his opponent's fall to the canvas. Pietro Feretti's face went white. There was a peculiar sensation of goose-flesh at the back of his neck and on his scalp, and of terrified nausea at the pit of his stomach. He stole out and home, running like a frightened hare.

The next day Fitzgerald passed by. Pietro's smile came only with an effort. His teeth flashed with their customary dazzle, but in his eyes there was deadly fear.

"How did you like the fight, kid?" the boxer inquired.

"Fine," the little Italian forced himself to answer. "A great stuff."

"That was only an appetizer to me," the Cyclone commented grandiosely. "You ought to see me up against live ones. I kill them dead and I drink their blood."

The fear of the man grew on him. It bothered him until the smile became an anemic, drawn thing. He would dodge into the store at the sight of the hulking figure, fearing even to speak to him, lest by some chance remark he would draw on himself that Berserker and deadly rage. The patrons of the wine-shop remarked his changed mood.

"*Ebbene*, what is wrong, Pietro?" they would chaff him. "Why no smile? Has your girl gone back on you? That is nothing. A girl! *Ma che!*"

"It's nothing." Pietro smiled sickly. "Yes, my girl!"

Add to his fear the incident with Patrolman Rior-dan, the humorist of the precinct, who stopped before the store.

"And I thought you were a nice sort of fellow,"

Riordan spoke solemnly, "and now I find you're a tough guy!"

"*Ma che?*" the Livornian babbled. "*Ma che?*"

"Hanging around with the Cyclone!" he reproved sternly. "Some day I'll be running you both in for murder, that's what I'll be doing." He moved haughtily on.

And his brother, too, had noticed it.

"You look!" the fierce-browed elder warned. "You talk to that loafer, that bum, that thug. Some day he ask for money. You got no money. You give him my money—"

"But no—"

"But yes!" Vincenzo mimicked. His voice changed to a snarl. "And if anything is wrong with my money; you know what I said. You know, don't you? I said jail!"

IV

He had finished strewing the fresh sawdust on the floor, placing the chair, polishing the counter. By some devious way the sun had stolen into Columbia Street, like a stranger who had lost his direction, and the straight morning beam of it fell into the store through door and window. As he polished the glasses for an instant he broke into song:

"Ma 'natu sole
Cchin bel' chine
O sole mio! Sta 'n front' a te—"

He had not seen Fitzgerald for a week now, and the fear of the fighter was passing from him. He had done the right thing, that was the idea. There was something the church says about the occasion of sin. Of course there was no occasion of sin, but there

was occasion of danger. Avoid it. That was the idea. *Ecco!*

“O sol’, o sole mio! Sta—”

He looked up for an instant toward the beam of sunlight and he saw with a shock of terror that coming through the doorway was the Cyclone. He walked toward the counter directly. He leaned over and caught the assistant by the lapel of the coat.

“Say, fellow,” he began brusquely, “you’re a friend of mine, ain’t you?”

“Sure!” Pietro managed a smile. “Friend of every one.”

“Well, then, slip us a ten-spot. Will you?”

“A ten-spot?” There was a dry feeling to the top of the Livornian’s palate; a quivering to his scalp.

“Ain’t you got it?” Fitzgerald asked anxiously. His brows creased in anxiety until seemingly they threatened like thunder.

“Sure, I got it!” Pietro answered quickly. He had it—all he had in the world. He had intended spending it for presents to friends in Leghorn, not so much for sheer friendship as a pardonable desire to impress them with his wealth and importance in the new world. He fished it out in frayed one-dollar bills. He passed it across the counter to Fitzgerald. The boxer pouched it rapidly and moved out.

“You’re all right, fellow,” he stopped to shoot across his shoulder. “And listen. This is all right, too. Get me?”

But Pietro Feretti wasn’t listening. A cold sweat had broken out at the back of his collar, and his brain was whirling like a gyroscope. It was not the ten dollars, it was the action. He put down the glass shakily on the counter and sank faintly on the chair. If he hadn’t had the money, what would have hap-

pened? He would be lying as inert and senseless now as the man he saw Fitzgerald knock out at the boxing match that night; worse than that even: perhaps dead. The thought appalled him. He got terribly faint for a minute and had to cling to the edge of the counter. If he hadn't had the money . . .

Very distraught and very nervous he served the customers of the wine-shop that evening. He would start when a patron pushed his chair back; jump when, at an animated sentence, a man would thump his fist upon the table.

"What's got you, Peter?" some one asked him. "You been seeing the ghost of Carlsen, the Swedish sailor that was murdered next door, or of the man that got throttled last night down at Ed Shuhmann's?"

"Or maybe," another suggested, "one of those gunmen or tough guys has been holding him up." And they both laughed.

But they received no answering smile from him. Pallidly he collected glasses and brought them behind the counter to be filled again, and at each visit back he would see in imagination the huge bulk of Fitzgerald leaning across the counter, the thunderous frown on his brow, the set jaw. . . .

Riordan, the jolly cop, passed him next morning as he was taking the shutters down.

"So that friend of yours, the Cyclone, hasn't killed you yet?" the patrolman said in surprise.

"Ugh!" gasped the wine-shop assistant.

"Oh, I don't suppose he'd kill you," Riordan corrected himself. "He'd probably only maim you for life."

"What for?" Pietro babbled. "What for?"

"Oh, the Cyclone's all right if you treat him right. He's a nice fellow. Only if he asks you for any

money, give it to him. He may come in and tell you 'Give me a hundred dollars or I'll twist your arms out.' Take my advice: if you want your arms, come through."

The patrolman was enjoying the consternation on the Livornian's face. It spurred him to further efforts.

"Sure, Fitz is all right, only the way he holds up people. There hasn't been a robbery around here for years that Fitz hasn't put through. Ask him yourself. He'll tell you."

"But you . . . but the police . . ."

"Say, kid—" Riordan turned on him reprovingly—"don't you ever read the papers? Don't you know that the police stand in with all these burglars and dips? How do you think us cops could live unless we got our whack out of it? Oh, get wise. Get wise." And he strolled on with that utter impassivity of countenance of his, which was the chief element of his humor.

Pietro got down the shutters at last—how he did not know, for that indefinable faintness had come over him again. He staggered into the shop and leaned heavily on the counter. Yes, he understood now. Vaguely he had heard of the blackmail waged on the shopkeeper by the thug. And he knew, himself, from the chatter of the shop, the terrible things that happen in the Italian colony: of the raids of "Tiger" Patello; of the Black Hand men; of the even more fearful *Mafioti*, who exact tribute with knife and dynamite, who rob and kidnap, who kill and maim.

His brother came down the stairs, sleepy, angry as always. His voice cut like a whip.

"Get to work," he directed. "What are you loafing for? Good-for-nothing! Calabrian!"

Pietro had had a vague idea of appealing to his brother for help to conquer this terrible situation. But he knew now, seeing him, how useless that appeal would be. A laugh, a torrent of abuse, a "*Che ma fi?*—What is it to me?" would be all the help he would receive.

He went about the day's work mechanically at the order of his brother, responding to the sharp tone as a slave might respond to a whip. Men came in and out for a glass of wine or a bottle to take away, or to arrange for the refreshments at a wedding or a funeral, but they all seemed wrapped up in their own business and took no notice of him. He had some way expected that a customer or a friend would notice his fear and pallor, question him about it, and devise a means to cope with this vampire, who would bleed him to the whiteness of a corpse. But none did.

"What is it to them?" he asked bitterly.

And even the policemen were in league against him.

Tears would come into his eyes and a little soft sob rise in his throat as he thought of Leghorn; of the laughing days in the factory; of the old men sitting in the sun, effervescing gently into death; of the old women in the quiet autumn of their lives; of the young women springing with the sap of youth, and the little brown children on the cobblestones. All had a smile for him. There every one was his friend. And from that Paradise of charity he had wandered into a by-street filled with the evil things of life, where he was a thrush pursued by gerfalcons, or a rabbit with the beagles behind him, slaver-mouthed and eager. . . . He, the friend of every man!

At two in the afternoon Fitzgerald crashed in, savage and threatening. At the door he left an under-

sized man in a sweater with a bag. He walked across swiftly to the counter. Pietro looked to the right and to the left wildly, like a trapped animal.

"Kid," the Cyclone announced, "I been getting a raw deal." His savage jaw shot out and his eyes gleamed vindictively. "Look here," he shot out, "it's too bad, but you got to spiel with forty bucks."

"Forty! Forty! Forty!" the Italian nearly screamed.

The Cyclone hardly heard him. He drew his great bulk up. He raised his arm. His gigantic shoulder muscles bulged beneath his coat.

"I'm going to kill a guy in Philadelphia to-night," he announced. His right hook swished through the air like a flail. "One punch and he'll be dead to the world."

There was money in the till, plenty of it, Pietro knew. A hundred or more lay there to pay a wine bill of the wholesale men. Breathlessly, with trembling fingers, he took out forty.

"Now listen to me, Pete," the fighter said, "I'll be back on Monday. I'd be here to-morrow, only you won't be open. Monday, see." He was gone.

For hours he could hardly realize what he had done. He only knew that his legs felt like lead, and there was a sensation as if some broad-bladed weapon had been pressed downward into his vitals. Vincenzo had gone out to attend to some real-estate business in Harlem and at every step that crossed the door Pietro started guiltily, and turned faint. So the matter was solved. It was not to be death or maiming at the hands of the fighter. It was to be jail instigated by his brother—his brother who stood in, as he boasted, with the politicians of the district. It would be ten or twenty years of cell life, of breaking stones, of punishment and indignities. And if

his brother did not discover the theft until Monday, there would be, on Monday, the thug returning with his insatiable demands. To whom could he go? The police? The police! Bah! The brigands!

At seven his brother returned. The dull, murky October evening had set in, and the oil-lamps were lighted. A few customers sat about a table, a flask of Chianti between them. Vincenzo walked straight toward the till. Pietro stopped him.

"I feel ill," he babbled, "I go to a drug-store."

He walked to the door quickly, and once outside he broke toward the right in a steady run. A little mist was swirling before his eyes, and he knew he was crying, for great tears were moistening his cheeks and little whining sobs broke from his throat. Half-way toward the bridge he knocked into Ed Shuhmann and ran swiftly on.

"Somebody's been feeding that kid liquor," Ed growled. "They hadn't ought to. I'm going to talk to him."

He ran on swiftly, expecting every instant to hear the hue and cry behind him. Near State Street he slowed to a walk, for in the swiftness of the pace his wind had broken. And now his tears became more apparent, his sobs louder. Riordan, the policeman, had come in for night duty, and he caught a glimpse of the broken figure as it crept by.

"I wonder if that brother of his has been putting anything over on Pete," he thought. "By God! if he has, I'll knock his block off!"

Pietro had come to Montague Street now. Above him, to the right, great houses reared like castles on a cliff. To the left of him the black chasm of the East River ran. He cut down the wharf like a hare on the turn.

"The friend of every man!" he choked.

He made his way down the wooden wharf, his feet pattering hollowly, like the rolling of a drum. He ran along, whimpering in a frenzy. At the end he stopped. The river raced by with the speed of the outgoing tide. In front of him, across the way, New York flashed in a chaos of electric lights. He stood for a moment. Tears flooded his cheeks.

"*Ah, Dio mio!*" he sobbed. "The cold, hard place!"

A current of cold air seemed to strike him as he jumped, and the noise his plunge made was hollow, like the plunge of a round stone. As he came up again, gasping, he felt the undertow grip him viciously about the legs. He opened his mouth to scream, but a wave slapped him in the face and it turned his shout into a high shrill whimper, like the yelp of a rabbit when the beagles have caught it on the turn. The undertow jerked him downward, and he went with a vain beating of hands.

On Monday morning the Cyclone strode into the wine-shop with the air of a conqueror. He looked about him. There was only Vincenzo behind the counter.

"Come here, you!" he commanded. "Where's that kid brother of yours?"

Vicenzo looked at him saturninely.

"He's drowned," he stated succinctly. "You'll find him in the Morgue." He moved quickly down the store.

It took a full minute for the information to sink into the fighter's brain. He looked dazed.

"The poor little guinea!" he murmured. "The poor little guinea!"

A mist of tears crept into his hardened eyes. His shoulders bowed.

“And me owing him this!” he said to himself.

And opening his hand, he regarded dully the fifty-dollar bill lying in it, crumpled, like a crushed yellow rose.

VI

MRS. ALEXANDER TYSON: TOWARD A MEMOIR

MRS. ALEXANDER TYSON must have been all of seventy years old, but it would have been hard to guess, at her age. All who knew her agreed in calling her a remarkable woman, meaning that her personality was a very strong one, without saying whether it was a force for good or for evil. And in no way was she more remarkable than in appearance.

You would have thought that at seventy a woman should be frail—a little wisp of body with white hair, with transparent hands and an air of sweet gentleness. Mrs. Alexander Tyson was robust, fattish, and hard of body. And by some sort of physical phenomenon, her hair, that had once been reddish brown, had not become white, but a sort of dead gold. The only sign of physical decay in her was that her eyesight was very bad; but, then, it had never been good, even as a girl. She would not, however, admit it at any time, refusing, in her obstinate way, to wear glasses, to acknowledge ever that her eyes were not as good as those of anybody else. They were of a China blue, and made you very uncomfortable when they looked at you, seeming to disestablish immediately any contact between you, a young person, and herself, a very remarkable woman.

Though she was a fattish woman, yet there was never about her that air of generous warmth one

associates with plump femininity. The bulky well-defined figure had something queer about it. She was like one of those hardy, bloated plants which spring up in a garden without any reason for their existence. Or one might have thought that within her all the sap had frozen, and freezing had expanded, as water expands, forcing her body outward in harsh curves.

If you had been told she was a woman of fifty you would not have liked her and not hesitated to say so; but being told she was seventy years old, you said she was a very remarkable woman.

All this is the stranger because there exist portraits of her of half a century ago. Smiling, very sweet portraits, the plumpish face, the glorious hair like a copper-colored bush, the strange and childish blue eyes; and if you were asked to see the girl of that likeness as a very old woman you would have imagined a sweet, kindly old lady, full of understanding, very nice to little children and dogs, who would find it difficult to be hard about anything or anybody—and not at all such a remarkable woman as Mrs. Alexander Tyson.

Now had come the autumn of southern New England, a strange, nostalgic atmosphere of blue mists, the tang of burning leaves, the glossy crows, late autumn flowers marching bravely in the rear-guard of summer. A little coldness was in the fall air, and soon the cider-mills would be turning. For all these Mrs. Alexander Tyson cared little, for nature was nothing to her. She liked things to be right, the drive well blue-stoned, the grass cropped, and the flowers tended, so that they should not become raggedy.

When autumn comes, old women grow pensive. It is a season that is very sib to them. The quietness of woods, the slumbering flowers, all seem to say:

"Peace! Peace! The unquiet of spring is done, and hot, cruel summer, the great passionate storm, and furnace-like days; and now comes our time, slumber! slumber!" And in the clear chill air they see so clearly. So sweet a perspective comes to them. They fold sweet old hands on ancient laps. The hills are brown, the leaves of the hills are brown, everywhere are the brown eyes of God.

But Mrs. Alexander Tyson was not pensive this sweet autumn morning. On her fattish face was a look of dignified triumph. Nothing vindictive, but vindication. She liked things to be right, and here at last was a thing that had been bothering her for fifty years, set at last to rights.

The local clergyman had been to see her the evening before and told her that her old friend—her friend of fifty years before, her enemy since—Nan Lockwood was dying.

"And she wants to see you, Mrs. Tyson. She wishes to be friends before she passes over to the great majority."

"To be friends, I'm afraid, is impossible."

"She is dying, Mrs. Tyson, and she wishes to see you. You can't refuse. She wishes you to forgive her for whatever she did to offend you."

"To forgive her?"

"Yes, she said that, to forgive her."

"And she is dying?"

"Yes, Mrs. Tyson. There is no doubt. She is bound for that bourne from which no traveler returns."

"Then I will see her."

"Oh, God will reward you, Mrs. Tyson."

"He has rewarded me."

All afternoon, all night she was cheerful. She was like some parched land on which a gentle rain was

falling. For all that she was peaceful she did not sleep. The sweet night noises came to her: silken rustle of the dried leaves, barking of foxes, chirrup of crickets, the distant whistle of a train. Next door to her her granddaughter, "Sunny" Tyson, tossed listlessly in her troubled rest. "Poor child! Poor child! Mrs. Tyson thought. She was immensely fond of Sunny. "Perhaps soon there will be news for her." She smiled mysteriously.

In the granddaughter of twenty she could see herself of fifty years before, the copper-colored hair, the plumpish face and dimpling smile. Sunny had hazel eyes—that was the only difference. But looking at the girl, she sensed how sweet she herself had been half a century ago, before Nan Lockwood, her dearest friend, had shown herself to be such a traitor, such a sly, bad woman—fifty years ago.

She often thought bitterly how wonderful the Lockwood family had seemed to her when she was a girl. Old General Lockwood, Nan's father, who had fought Indians in the days before the war; and Alfred who had lost an arm in the war, at the Wilderness it was; and Jim, the black sheep of the family, who had killed a man in a duel and was in hiding until he got to France. She remembered the only time she had ever seen Jim, and how his picture remained with her: tall and slight and dark, with piercing black eyes, and the swaggering carriage of him. And the pleasant air of vice he had; you knew in his eyes that he was a gambler. Right away, in her girlish fashion, she had fallen in love with Jim. But Jim was not for her. He was already married, to some French heiress of New Orleans, some strain of Old World aristocracy. And it was over her he was later to kill a man.

It was probably because he was like Jim that she became engaged to Albert Jennings, who wanted to be a poet after the manner of Mr. Poe. Tall and slim and dark, and with the same air of dissipation, though where Jim's dissipation was of a gentlemanly aristocratic sort, that of Albert Jennings was a sinister thing. He was a morbid drinker, and she probably consented to marry him from the vanity that she could reform him; that, and because he looked like Jim Lockwood, and because he was the most important person visiting around New Canaan that year.

Very probably she could have made a decent citizen of him, and a good man. The summer he spent in New Canaan he never touched liquor. He seemed very happy, and published a lot of poetry in Mr. Greely's newspaper. He enjoyed simple things like sailing on the sound, and barn dances, and long rides. Everybody called him Lucy Knapp's poet. A very pleasant summer that—1870, or was it '71?—what with all the talk about Jim Lockwood, and whether he would escape or not. And where he was, in New Orleans or New York. And her own engagement to Albert, and the very nice letter Mr. William Cullen Bryant wrote to Albert over some poem he had printed of his; every one seemed excited over that, though she couldn't understand what every one was making such a fuss over. And all thought her a lucky girl to have Albert, now that he seemed so reasonable, so sensible. All except Nan.

She remembered that Nan had thrown doubts on the wisdom of the marriage. "If, after it's over, Lucy dear, after the first flush of love, he begins again, it would be terrible for you. I wish I could be

sure. I wish . . ." Oh, the sly, bad woman! And only two nights later, she had caught Nan and Albert together, kissing. Not quite caught, but seen them.

She remembered the soft August night, the great full moon there was. Among her own relations in her home there had been talk of Jim Lockwood; some one of the country-side had seen him in New York, right under the nose of the officers. It had thrilled her to think of the risks he took, and wonder would he get away safe. If he hadn't married that Creole lady . . . All through the night the old grandfather clock wheezed and clanged, and when it was after midnight, finding she could not sleep, she decided to walk out a little in the full moon. She often wondered since if some occult influence had sent her out. So, wrapping a cloak around her, she left the house quickly and wandered down the white road. She must have walked a quarter-mile until she came nearly to the gate of the Lockwood house, and there she saw Nan.

And there she saw Nan and Albert Jennings.

He was kissing her good-by. There was no doubt it was he—the tall, slim, black man. And it nearly one o'clock and all the world asleep for hours! In the dead of night, alone! Her knees were weak with vicarious shame. Sly Nan, who counseled her against this marriage. Cunning Albert, who was supposed to be in New York with his literary friends, Mr. Greely and Mr. Bryant. He had probably gone no farther than Stamford.

She wondered for a minute if she should disclose herself, but the fear they would think she was spying on them held her. She wouldn't give them that satisfaction. And then they went; Albert slinking,

careful, fearful of being discovered, like the sly thing he was. And Nan, the bad woman, crying in her handkerchief.

She had always been a person of decision even as a young girl, so when she returned she wrote a vicious, frigid letter to Albert, telling him it no longer amused her to be engaged to him, and counseling him to get back to the gutter whence he had arisen. Which advice he took, seemingly, for the only thing she ever heard of him again was that, after a prolonged debauch, he had thrown himself despondently in the East River, and was drowned. Somehow, Lucy thought, it was a judgment of Providence.

Nan she cut dead next day, nor would ever have anything to say to her; or meet her; or go any place she might meet her. Friends were excited, perturbed. Wanted to know why, but Lucy would give no reason. She could only tell the truth, and that she found would put her in a ridiculous position. Nan Lockwood had stolen Lucy Knapp's poet! Oh, no! Nan, hypocritical little beast, tried often to see Lucy; wrote letters which Lucy never answered. Sly, bad woman! From her letters you would think she knew nothing of what had happened. But Lucy never flinched from her duty. They never spoke again.

And from perturbation in the country-side it became a wonder; and from a wonder, a fact, which people accepted, never uniting the two together. At times, as at the time of their marriages—Lucy's to Mr. Tyson and Nan's to Mr. Judd—their old friendship was remembered.

"Lucy and Nan were great friends once, but they never speak any more."

"Why?"

"Oh, goodness knows. Some dress, or some party, or something one of them said."

"What became of that poet that Lucy was engaged to?"

"Oh, he was no good! He went on a drinking bout while he was still engaged to her, and flung himself in the river."

"She was as well rid of him."

"The Lord was good to her there!"

"What became of Nan's brother, Jim, who killed a man in a duel?"

"Oh, he escaped to France."

"Living in Paris?"

"Paris or Monte Carlo."

"Guess he wishes he could come back here!"

"Guess he does."

With ridiculously mechanical regularity years went by, popped around a corner, mimicked like marionettes, slowly faded into an inexorable recessional. About the time Nan Lockwood married young Judd—a little before, to be exact—Lucy Knapp married Mr. Alexander Tyson, an elderly, pompous man, most of whose money had been made in contracts during the Civil War, a man not easy to get on with, but a most notable catch for a young girl. And if one were to judge by the measure of the world's success, Mrs. Alexander Tyson, who had everything, was immensely superior to Nan Judd, who had nothing but a little worried smile and a husband who adored her. In a few more years the possessions of each were augmented; for there was born to her and Mr. Alexander Tyson a not unhealthy boy, while children rained down on the Judds, as though the stork of nursery mythology was the familiar spirit of the house. As they grew up they were rather ugly, rather

quiet, very likable, very ambitious children, something like the old general.

More years. Mr. Alexander Tyson grew old and querulous, and Master Alexander Tyson grew up disliked by the young people of the neighborhood, and Mrs. Alexander Tyson became more beautiful than ever—her blue eyes, her creamy skin, her copper-colored hair. Politics changed. The countryside changed, and people said the world was going to the dogs. And old General Lockwood died, leaving nothing but the echo of the trumpets of chivalry. And Jim Lockwood, in Paris, prospered in good repute. And, in course of nature, Mr. Alexander Tyson died, full of years and reproaches.

She would have been a very happy woman now, would Mrs. Alexander Tyson—with her riches, her sparkling widowhood, and her rather handsome, spoiled boy—had it not been for the memory of the wrong done her so many years before, and that the doer went still around, a source of constant irritation to her. About Nan Judd's eyes now, for all she was a year younger than the widow, were little shadows, and gray hairs would soon appear among the black locks, making her no longer pretty, but beautiful. And her mouth had become gentle and there was sweetness in her eyes. And nowhere had she any enemy but in Mrs. Alexander Tyson.

Whenever Nan's name was brought up, there was praise spoken of her, so that the youngish widow's throat choked with irritation. Whenever she passed Nan Judd walking in the road as she drove furiously, silently by, the look of quiet beauty on Nan's face infuriated her, and a desire arose in Lucy to stop and say terrible, vile things, unmasking Nan for what she was—a hypocritical, sly woman. Her own face was becoming, had become, hard, she knew from

her glass. And Nan's grew sweeter, though hardship was apparent in it. "A whited sepulcher, a vile whited sepulcher!" Lucy knew her.

And how she imposed on the country-side! It was a torture to Lucy to hear her extolled for this and the other virtue, when she knew, when she knew . . . And her own lips were sealed about that particular affair. But she could always work in a sneer about Nan's poverty, about her pathetic attempts to keep up appearances, and that satisfied her a little. When Nan seemed a little prosperous, Lucy suggested that it was money from Jim in Paris; from Jim, who couldn't show his face in the States again, because he had killed a man. And by innuendo she turned the very fair fight in which Jim had stood up into a sort of assassination for sordid reasons. Even the old dear general did not escape the lash of her tongue, for she insisted that his honors had come to him very easily, and that he would have been a very small person indeed compared with giants like General Ulysses Grant. General, huh?

So that, after a while, people ceased to mention the name of Lockwood in her hearing. And to Alexander Tyson's widow this was worse than open support, for it showed her there was confronting her a phalanx of public opinion. The utter injustice of it. Herself, she who had been wronged, was held to be in the wrong, and the wrong-doer had a very sweet image in all minds.

It became so bad, so much of an obsession, that she recognized a danger to herself, and she prayed that a just Deity would remove Nan Lockwood that was from the earth, so that she could get a little peace. Why should she be irritated all the time? If Nan would only die . . .

But she mustn't die, she mustn't die, before she

confessed her wrong. Before she stood starkly face to face with Lucy and admitted she had been a sly, bad woman; hypocritical, vile; thief of Lucy's love; thief of public opinion, thief of peace.

No, God mustn't let Nan die before she had wept for forgiveness at Lucy's knee, and admitted her guilt. No, Nan mustn't die until then. That was due to Lucy.

And now, on more than a dozen occasions, the thunder of the Milky Way had found a faint echo in the tinkle of New Year's bells. And the head of Nan had become a fantasy in black and silver. And her eldest son, Jack, had married youthfully and improvidently and very gallantly a little girl from Greenwich, and had himself a son, if one can call anything of three months' age by so potent a name. And Mrs. Alexander Tyson was brilliant and hard. And a new Alexander Tyson reigned.

The mouth and chin of the rather handsome boy had turned out, disappointingly, to be kind, and the lower part of his face was hidden now, for all his early twenties, with a beard. The beard was well trimmed, and fascinating in a way for this reason, that although his hair was dark, darker than his mother's, his beard was of a sandyish color, a not pleasing red. His dress was black, of an extremely conventional cut. Also he wore a black overcoat when he could, and the only hat that met his approval was a black derby.

In fine, he looked forty-three, although only twenty-three, and there was nothing in his eyes to belie his appearance. He had a place of business in Wall Street stocks and bonds, where Nan's son Jack also worked, but with this difference, that where Jack did business in twenties and fifties of dollars' worth,

Mr. Alexander Tyson dealt in thousands. Though they lived in the same place, they were not friends. They were not enemies, but not friends.

"Oh, hello! Tyson!"—very casually.

"How do you do, Judd!"—very frigidly.

When Jack married and his little son was born, the cool unfriendship of Alexander Tyson changed to vicious enmity. It was thought later that the girl from Greenwich whom Jack married was at the bottom of the trouble; that Tyson himself had eyed her with favor. It was also thought that some boyhood's slight had rankled in the more important man. Neither of these was a true explanation. The truth was that all his childhood Alexander Tyson had been immersed by his mother in an atmosphere of hatred for Nan Lockwood and all that was hers; and loving his mother as hard children love hard mothers, he had not asked the rights or wrongs of it. The Judd family was a family for him to hate, and he hated it with the cold, methodical hatred that suited him. Also, he said nothing of it, which suited him too; and he bided his time, which suited him best.

It is improbable that he ever angled for Judd, but finding him, in the way of business, in a position where he could hurt him, he drew him a little farther on, drew him a little too far . . .

Judd must have discovered what was up, and mentioned something of it at his mother's house, for from Nan Lockwood that was, Mrs. Alexander Tyson received the first letter she had had from her in over twenty years:

Lucy, for the sake of the time when we were girls and friends, don't let your son ruin my boy Jack. Please, please, Lucy.—NAN.

Mrs. Alexander Tyson swam in a sea of contentment. Nan was hurt, hurt to death. It was the first time she had ever known a Lockwood to plead for mercy. Perhaps it was the little grandchild that had weakened proud Nan.

And yet—not one thing in that letter to acknowledge the wrong done so long ago. Sly, cunning Nan! If she had only asked her for forgiveness! Said something! But no! Well, Mrs. Alexander Tyson wrote:

Mrs. Alexander Tyson regrets she cannot see her way to interfere in the matter mentioned by Mrs. Judd, as she has always held that the sphere of business is for men only.

Accordingly her son Alexander smashed Judd, not leaving him a penny. Nan's son took it in a most amazing manner, laughing when people sympathized with him, and evidently holding little resentment against Alexander.

"I couldn't have been much of a business man to be caught that way, so I'm as well out."

"It was a dog's trick, Jack."

"Not a bit. If it hadn't been Tyson, it would have been some one else."

So, gathering his wife, the pretty girl from Greenwich, and the small midget of a son, he set out for California. It must have been very hard on him to leave the country-side where he was born, but it was hardest of all on Nan, who had a sweet passion for the little grandchild. She had always loved babies, and the baby of her first-baby son was so precious to her. And when she would see him again he would be a shy boy and not the little baby she had known.

Nan cried, Mrs. Alexander Tyson heard, and was very lonely, very much hurt. Well, it was her own fault, Mrs. Tyson said. If she had only acknowl-

edged her guilt, been sincerely penitent, Jack need not have gone, and she could have had her grandchild now. Still, in spite of her grandmaternity, a sly, bad woman. She understood Nan, knew her feelings and thoughts, better now after more than a score of years of enmity, than when they were girls together, gracious and loving. They were closer now than they had ever been, for each to the other was a figure of heroic proportions, throwing everything else into disproportion. Though they never saw each other, never spoke, yet they were with each other all the day, in cold silence and heated thought.

She could understand how Nan felt, Mrs. Tyson moralized, because the consciousness of guilt lasts—always. And she thanked God she had nothing to reproach herself with. After all, it was much better to feel a wronged person, than to feel guilty of wrong-doing, as Nan must feel, as she had made her feel.

Ten years later Jim Lockwood died, and was brought home from Paris, to lie with his father the old general. And a strange thing: the country-side turned out for him, forgetting—or if they did remember, condoning—the fact that he was a refugee from the laws of his country. State officials, judges, even a representative of the French Government was there, and Mrs. Alexander Tyson, feeling in some occult way tremendously moved, shaken terribly, would have liked to be there; but the cold, calm face of Jim's sister, Nan, arose before her and prevented her. It occurred to Lucy that she might have been married to Jim but for the Creole lady, for whose sake he had fought and been exiled. It was a great ceremony, the laying to sleep of Jim.

And when, five years after that, Alexander Tyson

and his wife died in a railroad accident, leaving behind him the child "Sunny," hardly any one came to the funeral. A bleak, empty, unimportant pageant.

When he died his mother was sorry but not distraught. He had been a good son; that was all. He had been very loyal to her in the matter of the Judds, but he was the sort of person one admires but is never fond of. He was never a little child begotten in her body, her own; but nearly always a man, a full entity. She could never dominate him. When she attempted that, he simply retired in the dark recesses of himself and was silently impregnable. Behind the mask of his sandy, well-kept beard, his mind hid like a spider. And his black eyes were hard and brilliant, so that there was nothing to be learned from them.

She always pictured him as he stood talking to her—or, rather, listening to her—outside the house, his hard black eyes, his sandy beard, his derby hat, his black conventional overcoat, his rolled umbrella. He had always been a dutiful son—and very loyal to her in the matter of the Judds, but they had never been sweethearts. They had been allies. . . . It was known that his wife was passing unhappy.

With his marriage, though, his potentialities in the feud against Nan ceased, and with his death he was missed by his mother as some cumbersome piece of old-time furniture would always be missed, as one might say, "At the wall there used to stand grandfather's sideboard." And as against the wall there would always be a void that could not be filled by a modern thing, so there would also be a void in her life.

But worse might have happened. Nan might have died, and if Nan had died unrepentant—as a fact, if she died at all now—all reason for the being of Mrs. Alexander Tyson would have passed. To her

the dying of Nan would be as to human people the dying of God. Life there would be none. Un-thinkable!

She could not love, she could not dominate Alexander, but the daughter whom he left, "Sunny," she could both dominate and love. She cherished the child because it seemed to her that the child was herself in later teens. The same hair, the same face, the same smile, and though her eyes were hazel instead of china blue, some gestures, certain postures, particular preference for things, were so much Mrs. Alexander Tyson's own at Sunny's age! And she all but took an oath that here was one whose life would not be blighted as hers had been by a woman's treachery.

As the girl grew up she gave in more and more to the domination of the elderly lady. There was never any clash, any conflict, but more and more she was shaped and guided under Mrs. Alexander Tyson's manipulation. So much always was the idea of the elder woman with her that the thought always in her mind was: "What would Granny think of this?" "What would Granny do under these circumstances?" To defy her grandmother, to take a course contrary to that which her grandmother would approve, would seem to her blasphemy.

The conversation between these two—or, rather, the talk to which the girl would listen—was remarkable in that it was always of love. And to hear Mrs. Alexander Tyson discourse on love you would have imagined her to be an old romantic spinster, such strange ancient concepts did she have. You would never have thought, from her conversation, that she had been married and a mother. Her idea of a lover was a young, adventurous sort of person, a little wild, not quite respectable, whom a young and de-

voted wife would tame into a state of domestic welfare. The lineaments of this hypothetical lover were strangely like those of Jim Lockwood. The wild youth, the romantic gestures, the man killed in a duel—but then Jim Lockwood had married a Creole lady instead of taking to wife a New England girl who would have led him to reputable citizenship. And that was his mistake!

Also, she was never tired of telling the girl to beware of making friends with women, for her best friend would betray her. And she told her in a vague way, and by her very vagueness making a viciously evil thing of it, of how she had been wronged in her girlhood by her best friend.

“Your father, my dear, knew of it, and when an opportunity offered, he resented the wrong done me. He never forgave Nan Lockwood or Nan Lockwood’s children. He was a good son.”

“Poor Granny! poor Granny!” And Sunny’s eyes would fill with tears. “Your life spoiled. How terrible!”

A few years later, Nan’s grandson, Lockwood Judd, came to visit her. It was the little boy who was brought to California in his infancy, and was now grown to be a fine man, and a rich one, having inherited his grand-uncle Jim’s money. Not only his money but his looks, being so much like him that Mrs. Alexander Tyson, coming on him in the road unawares, was startled nearly to faintness, so great was the resemblance. The black hair, tall straight figure, the little swagger, the smile that men liked as much as women. The ghost of Jim? And then she remembered hearing that Jack Judd’s son was staying with his grandmother. Jack Judd’s son. That name conveyed nothing to her of this figure out of ancient dreams.

All summer he stayed there, and Sunny must have met and danced with him a dozen times before he was spoken of in the Tyson house. The queries of Mrs. Alexander Tyson about him were guarded, though eager, but Sunny's replies were meagerness itself. The girl showed a disposition not to discuss him, and the elderly woman thought that it was tact on the girl's part not to speak much of the grandson of the woman who had so wronged her grandmother, and the son of the man whom her father had ruined. It was sort of agreed that he didn't exist, that his appearance counted no more than that of any other visitor. So Sunny all through the summer continued meeting him and dancing with him; what else could she do? the old lady thought.

The old lady thought also: what a pity that Nan had shown herself to be such a sly, bad woman, such an impertinent woman, too. For seeing herself in the girl and seeing Jim in the boy, it all seemed to her that here were two people exactly suited to each other. If Sunny were to marry, as Sunny must, here was a lover out of dreams for her, and she was a bride to dream of, with her auburn hair, her hazel eyes, her cleverness. And they both had money—Lockwood his Uncle Jim's, and Sunny the fortune of her father and her grandfather. If his grandmother had been a decent woman, how desirable a match it would have been!

And for all she thought about it so much, she experienced a shock to the depth of her being when Sunny came to her at summer's end.

"Granny!" In her face were love and fear.

"Yes, Sunny."

"Granny, would you be very angry if I told you something?"

"Have I ever been angry with you, Sunny?"

"No, Granny, but . . ."

"But what, Sunny?"

"Granny," her voice sank to an awed whisper, "I love a man and he loves me and we want to get married."

"Who is it?"

"Granny!"

"I say who is it?" There was no doubt in her mind; she knew.

"It is Lockwood Judd, Granny."

The old woman was silent. Her china-blue eyes were dull and cold.

"Oh, Granny," the girl pleaded, "all you are thinking of happened so long ago. So long ago, Granny, so long ago."

"I think," the old lady said slowly—she had to speak slowly, such venomous waves of passion rolled within her—"I think I would rather see you dead than married to one of that evil breed."

"Granny, Granny, it wasn't Locky's fault, or mine. And so long ago, Granny, so long ago!"

"If you want to marry him, Sunny, do so. Marry the grandchild of the woman who did me the greatest injury that could be done. Marry the son of your father's worst enemy. But never come near me again. When you do, Sunny, you will leave me alone in my old age, the old age of a spoiled life, but I will never see you again."

"Granny, Granny!"

"You are a free woman, Sunny. You can choose."

The girl watched for a full minute, accusingly. Great tears sprang from under her eyelids, hovered on the lashes, ran down her face. Her mouth quivered piteously. Her throat was convulsed. No more piteous, more stricken figure was, since time began. But Mrs. Alexander Tyson was a remarkable

woman. Her china-blue eyes never moved. It was the stricken girl who turned away.

And a few days later Sunny's face was drawn and white, and her eyes burned out with weeping, and Lockwood Judd had gone away.

It was a very queer thing, but in spite of her harshness the old woman was torn in agony for the young girl. Her heart was set on this marriage, and she could have vicariously enjoyed the transports of the young couple, lived again in the young girl, as the thought was, but lived more fully than she had lived in her own life. She wanted to be the girl's confidante, her friend, her adviser; but when the child pleaded, some terrible possession, as of an evil spirit, arose in her, and spoke harshly for her, bitterly, implacably. She knew the evil spirit could be laid away by one thing: Nan's acknowledgment of guilt.

She had thought, too, that the forbidding of the match would have brought her ancient enemy to bay. She had all but expected a visit from Nan, who would have said: "Lucy, I am sorry for what happened long ago. I was a bad woman, a treacherous, evil woman, but don't, on account of my sin, keep these two young people apart. They love each other." And Mrs. Alexander Tyson was not the one to refuse forgiveness, even though she could never forget. She would have said: "Very well, Nan. You have poisoned my life. You brought ruin on your son. But if you are sorry I am content. The young people can get married. I will not stand in their way. I hope I am sufficiently a lady to be magnanimous." But no! Nan had never come. She had been afraid. She hadn't been straight enough to come and acknowledge her sin.

She felt a great sorrow for Sunny, whose happi-

ness Nan was blighting by her ancient sin. The girl was silent, white-faced. And on the one occasion Mrs. Alexander Tyson had attempted consolation the effect had been disastrous. Moved by the girl's drooping spirits, she had ventured disdain.

"Never mind, Sunny. Remember there are as good fish in the sea as ever were caught."

With a low moan the girl had broken from the room, and had stumbled blindly away, hitting things in her piteous flight; and her wild, tearing sobbing came in little gusts for days.

Mrs. Tyson determined to take her away for the winter and spring and summer—the Carolines, Florida and Maine. But nothing seemed to do her any good, and in the fall she brought her back to New Canaan. The girl's listlessness frightened her, and she called in a medical man to prescribe a tonic.

"What is precisely the matter with the child?" she asked.

"She is dying of a broken heart."

"Oh, nonsense! People don't die of broken hearts."

"What I mean is this: she has no desire to live. Her vitality is evaporating, so that a small accident, a shock, a cold, would carry her off. That is, unless she gets what her heart is set on."

"Nonsense, man, nonsense. What she needs is a good tonic."

Nevertheless Mrs. Alexander Tyson was frightened. And she called it nothing short of Providence when she heard that Nan, dying, had asked her to call and vouchsafe forgiveness.

It seemed to her that she had been cheated when she saw the little frail lady resting on a couch with great heaps of cushions, and looking westward to

where the sun was going down. She had robbed death of vulgarity and sordidness, and was dying as a gentlewoman should, without fuss or fear. . . . The big, buxom nurse gave a flick to the cushions, and left the room. . . .

"I thought you were dying, Nan."

"I am, Lucy. To-night, or to-morrow night, when the sun goes down."

"Aren't you afraid, Nan?"

"No, why should I be?"

Mrs. Alexander Tyson felt baffled; felt vulgar; felt out of place. There was not the scene as she had anticipated it: a moaning, tossing figure pleading for forgiveness and fearing hell-fire. Was there a trick in it? With narrowed eyes she watched the dying woman.

"You are looking very well, Lucy."

"Yes, I am very robust."

"You are a remarkable woman."

There was another pause, very uncomfortable for Mrs. Tyson.

"And how is little Sunny? Is she well? Is she happy?"

"Quite well. Quite happy," Mrs. Tyson felt forced to say. Ah, now they were getting down to facts! Now she was on firm ground. "And Lockwood, your grandson, how is he?"

"Poor Lockwood," Nan sighed. "He has left on an expedition to the South Pole."

"Will he be coming back soon?"

"Not for many years."

Years! Years! The thought strengthened her. Poor Sunny! She would never see him, never live so long. Oh, well, Mrs. Tyson had done her best, her very best—but poor Sunny!

"Lucy," Nan was saying, "would you please tell

me: what did you have against me these many, many years—these fifty years and more. Why did you persecute me?”

So cool, so calm, even in the face of death! How could she? Mrs. Alexander Tyson was trembling with an access of nervous anger.

“Do you remember one night you said good-by to some one? It was very late, after midnight. . . . Just before we ceased to be friends, just the night before,” she prompted Nan’s memory. . . . And you were kissing him, and you were crying as he went away—a bright moonlight night.”

“Ah, yes. I remember, I remember.”

“Who was it, Nan?” Mrs. Alexander asked with cool, cruel triumph.

The dying woman turned from the window and looked at her in surprise.

“My brother Jim,” she said. “Why?”

While the shock was still on Mrs. Tyson, there arose before her china-blue eyes a rush of ghosts—the dead poet; her all but barren marriage; young Judd and his wife going into exile; and Sunny with her despairing, stricken eyes; and young Lockwood trudging blindly toward the icy pole; and the ghosts of fifty vacuous, withered years, like gaunt stripped trees. . . .

She pulled her jangled faculties together.

“I’m afraid I can’t believe you, Nan,” said Mrs. Alexander Tyson.

VII

A MARRIAGE HAS BEEN ARRANGED

ALL through the first round and the second, and half-way through the third now, the Italian challenger had watched the champion's eyes, trying to discover what was behind them—hatred or contempt or what. But he could make nothing of those glinting steel specks. He had often watched MacSherry fight, from MacSherry's corner, and, to the challenger, MacSherry had always seemed a new personality when he went into the ring, a strange, reasoning motor-power behind a hitting engine of whalebone and steel.

Angelo shifted to the right as the champion lunged forward. Mechanically he shot out his left hand and his right. They careened about the ring. Something struck the Italian's ribs like a battering-ram. The challenger snapped home a counter to the ear. The referee hopped about like an excited dog. He clapped his hands.

"Come on! Come! Come on, now! Break, boys! Break! Come on! Make it snappy! Come on!"

The men drew apart and returned to their swift, economical sparring. The gong crashed the end of the round. Seconds poured into the ring like pirates into a captured ship.

All the club was clapping like rifle fire. Angelo paid no attention to it. The current from the flapping towel poured over his body in a gusty breeze. A

sponge pressed against the back of his neck made him shiver. He was faintly cognizant of his manager's whisper:

"You're doing fine, kid. You're all right."

Angelo's eyes were in MacSherry's corner. All the MacSherrys were there: the middle-weight champion lying easily against the ring post; old Pat MacSherry, who had been heavy-weight champion in his day, a great bulwark of a man who seemed more like a benevolent clergyman than a heavy-weight fighter; Alec, who was near the top of the present big-gun ranks, a lanky, sandy-haired man with enormous hands—the "Monaghan Murderer," he was called; Tom, the light-weight who had nearly finished the Jew boy champion at Providence; and Baby Joe, who was all of sixteen, and had as pretty a left hook as ever you saw. "The fighting MacSherrys," they were named, and a magazine had printed their pictures—all of them, including Ma MacSherry, who, it was said, could box as well in her day as any man, and Kate! And Kate!

"Ge' up!" The chair was plucked from beneath him. The gong crashed. He was in the ring center again. A cautious spar, a rhythmical shuffling of feet on the resined canvas, and the referee eager as a dog. There was a smile in Jim MacSherry's eyes.

"Nice little place they got here, Angie," he observed casually. "Heh! Nice lil club." His left hand followed that up like a stone from a catapult, and the challenger felt his whole body rock, from the cheek-bone, where the blow had struck, to his very heels. The right crashed over his heart. He gasped and began fighting savagely, blindly. A clinch, and the referee was forcing them apart.

"Come on, boys! Break! Break! Have a heart! Break!"

They were sparring again, with Jim smiling.

“And a nice crowd o’ people they got, too!”

Angelo beat him at his own game. The challenger’s hands smashed home. One—two! Jim stood back with an appreciative grin.

“You guinea pup!” He spoke quietly. “I’m going to murder you for that!”

A plunging rush and savage in-fighting. The ropes creaked like straining cordage. There was the *pit! pat! smack!* of gloves. Red weals showed on their bodies. Swiftly Angelo brought his right hand up in a jarring uppercut. The champion held on like grim death. The sedate club had half risen from its seats, and was breathing fast with excitement. The bell . . .

“Gee, kid!” Angelo’s manager had been hoarse with excitement. “I thought you had him!”

The challenger sank into his chair. Thank God he didn’t have him! Thank God Jim MacSherry didn’t go under then! He would never see Kate again! Never again!

From Jim’s corner old MacSherry watched the Italian middle-weight with a sudden respect in his eyes.

Angelo had been told that at the moment of drowning a man’s whole life would flit before his eyes, as on a cinema screen. He could never believe that. There wasn’t time enough, he said. But now before his own eyes, in his corner waiting for the seventh round, there unrolled before his brain every scene of his meeting and knowing Kate MacSherry, Jim’s sister, sister and daughter of the world’s champion fighters.

He had met her when he was engaged as sparring partner to Jim, when Jim was training for his bout

with Dane Smith, the Australian wonder. A fine muscular girl, proud of her father and her fighting brothers, she had the calm white face of a nun, and tawny eyes and tawny hair—the coloring, one thought immediately, of a leopardess, though there was nothing of the leopardess in her, except when one spoke slightly of her father or her brothers, which was very seldom. It had occurred once or twice at the expensive school to which her father sent her, when the daughter of a crooked English bucket-shop keeper and the daughter of an Oriental pawn-broker had sneered at her father, whom a President delighted to honor. They will both, I warrant, remember that day.

Angelo will never forget a detail of that morning he met her. He wandered into the MacSherrys' in their big house at Port Chester, and he discovered Kate, flushed, trying to plant some Holland bulbs, her face of a New England nun set in lines of depression, and she was swearing most delectably.

"Scusi!" Angelo took the spade. He smiled at the idea of her slender foot driving it through the earth.

"What do you know about it?"

"Know all about it," Angelo smiled. "My father gardener."

"Gosh-ding it!" Kate nodded at his firm hand as he patted the trench into subjection. "This bird does."

Because he was the laughing type of Italian, always grinning, always singing, and because he was different from the majority of sparring partners—he did not have a thirst to be quenched only in saloons, nor had he a following of the lowest type of courtezans—the MacSherrys, those princes of the ring, gave him the freedom of the house, and per-

mitted him the society of Kate. They seemed amused when Kate tried to learn Italian songs—"Torna a Sorrento," and "O sole mio." Jim would joke him about it when sparring: "As a fighter, Angie, you're a great opera singer," and then, *bam!* would come Jim's stunning right hook to the point.

There was another occasion Angelo would never forget, and that was when he drubbed Corporal Sims, the English welter, who had cajoled Tom, the MacSherry light-weight, into a match at catch-weights. The Birmingham boxer entered the ring twelve pounds heavier than Kate's brother, and Tom had no show from the first bell. The MacSherrys brooded over that defeat.

"'Tisn't as if it were on the square," old Pat complained; "but to jockey the lad into a match he had no chance of winning—"

"It was a damned shame!" Kate broke out.

"Where in hell do you learn language like that?" old Pat roared. "One more like that out of your little trap, and back to the convent for you. I don't know where you hear it. It's not here."

"Just-a wait!" Angelo was brooding, too. "Just-a let Sims-a wait!"

He met Sims in a match in New Haven, and for twelve rounds—so they tell me; I wasn't there—he outboxed, outgamed, outgeneraled the touted visitor. He could have landed a knock-out in any round. That would only have ended the bout. But he ended Sims's career in America with that deadly exhibition. It was after that fight they dubbed him the sporting *nomme-de-guerre* under which the "Police Gazette" and journals of that sort love to extol him—Angelo Vetriolo, "the Calabrian Cobra."

Lanky Alec, the heavy-weight champion's bugbear, was in Angelo's corner that night, and Baby Joe,

and after the fight they had insisted on bringing him home with them. The news had reached the MacSherry home by telephone that Tom had been avenged. You can figure the scene yourself: Pat, the old ring wizard, reading a paper by the fire, and Ma MacSherry sitting opposite him, sedate and dignified, as a mother of four great sons and a bonny daughter should be; and Kate, tawny-headed, tawny-eyed, sitting strumming at the piano, striking the keys harder than the best pianists do.

They stood in the door of the sitting-room, Alec and Baby Joe, and Angelo with them, a deprecating, shy smile on his face, his cap rumpled in his right hand.

With a sound that was between a whoop and a gurgle of delight, Kate had sprung from the piano. She rushed across the room. She threw both arms about Angelo, and hugged him most delectably. She placed a resonant kiss on either cheek. It was then that Angelo broke down and cried.

"He hollered like a kid," Baby Joe informs me. "He just breaks up and blubbers. What do you know about that! Italians," he is convinced, "are a queer bunch!"

Not queer, I ought to tell him; just rather human! But he is too young. Those tears decided old Pat MacSherry. Next day he had Angelo brought to him.

"I'm sending you down to New Orleans," he told the Italian middle-weight, "to some old friends of mine. They'll see you get a good chance. What about it?"

"Maybe you t'ink I love him," observed Angelo cryptically.

"I don't think. I'm sure. Go on, no get over it in a month."

Every dog is entitled to one bite, says a popular legal concept, and no more. Angelo was entitled to one kiss, and old Pat was going to take good care that Angelo would get no more. This white rosebud of the MacSherry stock was not for an unknown Italian sparring partner. Angelo received some kisses, nevertheless, that he kept silent about.

It was on the eve of his departure for Louisiana, and he had come to say good-by. Ma MacSherry, a little more generous than Pat, sent them both into the garden. It was unfair to them both that the summer moon was shining, for the moon has a fatal effect on both Irish and Italian. It melts the Gael and fires the Latin.

Angelo burst into song :

“Ve’ che sorte m’e toccata!
Star sepolto in questa fossa!
Som ridotto pelle ed ossa;
Ne morro dal dispiacer!”

“He sing,” Angelo translated, “what a hard thing-a happen! He buried in this-a dunge; he nothing but skin and the bone; he won’t get out any more. Just-a like me.”

So she kissed him once, twice, and three times. “So as it won’t be so hard on him to go,” she said, to make it right with her conscience. “So as he will come back to you, you mean,” her conscience told her flatly.

For eighteen months he had seen nothing of her, nor heard from her even. The time had been spent in a businesslike manner, as the record book will show. There we find a list of fifteen fights, with their results tagged to them: Kid Such-and-Such, 12 rds.

K.O.; Battling So-and-So, 3 rds. K.O.; Cyclone What's-His-Name, 1 rd. K.O.; with a few wins on points and wins on fouls thrown in for variety.

To-night was the first time, too, he had met the MacSherrys since his trip South. He had parted with them a practically unknown middle-weight; he had come back a challenger for Jim's crown. There had been no hard feeling against him. They had all come over to his corner with a smile and a hand-shake.

"Hello, Angie! How's the boy?"

They had none of them looked at his bandages. All the family were sportsmen. But Angelo was abashed. He hadn't wanted to fight Jim. It was just the chance of the ring. And he couldn't talk to them much, he was so overwhelmed. Least of all could he ask about Kate. The question wouldn't come.

He had never for a moment forgotten her. He remembered every word of hers, every feature, every changing expression. Her one flaw, he remembered too, and he loved it. She had hands that were nearly as large as a man's—the MacSherry hand—but they were long and white and very beautiful.

The seconds filed out of the ring with a rattle of buckets and bottles. The manager leaned against Angelo, ready to pluck away the stool.

"Look out, Angie. He's after you!"

Gong-ng-ng!

The members of the club wakened out of their after-dinner lethargy to watch the match with glinting eyes. They had come to see MacSherry, the champion, hand out one of his famous lacings to the presumptuous challenger, who as yet had not been seen in New York, at least since his days as a preliminary fighter. They had contracted the habit of watching Jim fight five slashing rounds and then

drop his man with a neat hook to the jaw. But the present bout promised more.

Underneath the big arc-lamp, the boxers seemed like animated statuary, each muscle and sinew standing out in chiaroscuro as though cast in plaster. The blond, stocky Irishman moved about freely with his slashing spar, crouched like a hunting animal about to spring, his left hand feinting, flashing like the tongue of a snake, his right drawn like a taut bowstring.

The challenger in front of him hardly moved, except for his flickering feet. He stood erect, swarthy and poised, his left arm turned, the glove resting carelessly, so it seemed, on his left flank, his right hand low, and the glove moving up and down, up and down, like the regular ticking of a clock. There was something tremendously businesslike about him, as there was something tremendously panther-like about the champion.

The audience was a motley one, and spelled money. There were bankers there, captains of industry, brokers from Wall Street—fleshy, massaged men who sought a change of thrills after their tape and ticker, and by whom the possibility of watching a champion pass out was no more to be missed than the thrill of a killing on the Exchange. There were races of the nearer Orient there, paunchy shifty-eyed men, eager to shed blood vicariously and vicariously give pain. There were old men there—septuagenarians and octogenarians who should have been at home plotting the careers of grandchildren rather than here acting indecorously the part of the young blood. There were crooks there—keen-faced strategists who were more dangerous with a pack of cards than a highwayman with a musket, and more merciless. And there were actors here, aping the manners

of the great world, eager to have a virile tale to rehearse to their easy conquests. Only once in a thousand faces could you see the amateur athlete, footballer or wrestler, boxer or golfer, the men with the clean brown faces and the hooded eyes. . . .

Over the ring the greenish arc-lamp sputtered and hissed like the macabre thing it seemed. In the ring the combatants shifted and sprang in silently, hitting, dodging, blocking like strange, malevolent marionettes. About them the referee trotted, clapping his hands, emitting his eternal cry: "Break! Break away! Break!" like the call of some raucous Arctic bird. There was a weird minor shuffle as the shoes moved over the canvas floor. There was a queer creak as the boxers reeled against the ropes. There was the sharp crack of the gloves against bone, the thud of it against flesh, the grunt as the boxer countered to the lead. There was the brazen, imperative gong.

For two rounds now the truth had dawned on Angelo, and to him it was something like a miracle, that he could beat Jim. It made him somewhat aghast.

In a rally, in the ninth, he had sunk his right hand to the heart, and he felt the champion give, shoulders and knees, and cling, like a smitten thing. It had been a matter of only ten seconds, but had Jim been on the floor, instead of holding in the clinch, the championship would have passed from him. It was amazing to Angelo to find how often he was beating MacSherry to the punch, and how little the champion's blows were hurting him. Jim was jabbing now, snappy blows that looked well from the ring-side; but there wasn't the power of the plunging lead with all the weight behind it. Angelo was amazed.

But Angelo was forgetting how he had improved

in the eighteen months, and he forgot also that Jim was twenty-nine years old, holder of the title for six years—only a young man as yet, but as a boxer, old.

"Listen, you got him! You got him! Kid, you got him!" Angelo's manager was frantic.

Angelo said nothing. What could he say? There was one person on earth Angelo did not want to get and that was Jim MacSherry. He knew that outside in the street, muffled up in the big car, Kate was sitting, hearing bulletins as rounds ended. He could see her now, in his imagination, were the news to come that her brother was being beaten. Her face would set into grimness, and her hands would crisp, and her tawny eyes would flash, and in the flashing of them there would be wintry tears. . . . She was there in the street, he knew. He felt her presence tingle through him.

His manager had disappeared for an instant. He was still jubilant when he came back, but a bit strained.

"Everything I got is on you, kid," he whispered. "Don't throw me down."

"Oh, Je'!" Angelo breathed.

Through the ropes he caught sight of Pammori, the Italian banker, signing a check and handing it to a man. Another man, a fat man in tweeds, was likewise handing over a check to cover Pammori's.

"Do you get that, Angie? Do you get that? You got to win, kid. Every guinea in town's got his jack on you."

"Oh, Je'!"

The timekeeper rapped on the ring. "Seconds out!" He raised the hammer of the gong, looking at his watch. "Twelfth round!" he announced.

"Get him, Angie!" The manager pleaded. "Don't throw me down."

"Oh, Je'!" Angelo was near crying.

The bell rang.

A rapid, flashing spar and a flurry of gloves, snapping lefts to the head ducked, blocked, and countered. A moment's savage in-fighting. Angelo felt the champion's rapid *dub-a-dub*, like a tattoo, against his ribs like the battering of small hammers. Mechanically he drove home his right to the heart and felt MacSherry sag. The champion clinched.

"Break away! Break! Break away!" the referee chanted like a frog of Aristophanes.

They fell apart. The champion rushed again, his left hand driving for the jaw. Angelo steadied him with a hook to the chin. The short, savage drives to ribs and stomach had been sapping MacSherry's strength. No longer the left hand snapped like a catapult, nor had the right that trip-hammer smash that took the crown from Paddy Jackson, who was called "The Bear-cat," and humbled the pride of England, and dropped the New Zealand Ghost in his tracks like a felled steer. The ring-side felt ring history in the air and leaned forward breathlessly. The bankers dropped their studied lethargy, and into the eyes of the merchants had come a glint. Comment passed like the faintest thunder. And still the champion plunged in.

"Get him, Angelo! Get him!" his seconds whispered through the ropes.

But Angelo didn't want to get him. He would have been content to let the fight go on its regular length, knowing that unless a knock-out was registered, the referee would not take away the title from Jim. He wished Jim had still the old smash in his

right, so that he might stun and drop him. He didn't care. He thought only of Kate.

Still there was lead and counter, jab, hook, and swift uppercut, the thud of blows and the shuffle of feet. And Kate, Angelo knew, was below, her hands crisped, her eyes flashing.

"Break away!"

She would never be anything to him but the memory of great softness in a summer garden, and kisses that made one disbelieve in a cold, ecclesiastic heaven. She was above him, remote as a remote star, but there was a memory he would have treasured all his days. How could he now, knowing that in her heart would be hatred of him?

"Come on, boys! Come on!" the referee urged.

There was no use letting up. Jim hadn't the punch to send over a knock-out. And he was weakening all the time. As they whirled toward the ropes in an instant of in-fighting Angelo caught sight of his manager's jubilant face, and the smile on the lips of Pammori the banker.

"Oh, Je'!"

He could quit cold, of course, but the MacSherrys would hate him more for that than for beating Jim. They did not take charity.

A long-range battle of left hands and the champion rushed: a stinging uppercut and he was limp in Angelo's arms.

"Oh, Je'! I'm sorry, Jim. Oh, Je'!"

"'T's a' right, Angie. Y' ain't got me yet!"

The referee was tearing them apart.

"Break! Break! Break!"

Jim was smiling. For an instant Angelo thought he was all right. He lashed out with right and left. He saw the champion's knees waver and his hands drop to his sides. His smile had been only the smile

of the losing sportsman. Angelo felt suddenly petrified. All about the ring the club thundered. Angelo looked appealingly at the referee. He couldn't hit Jim.

"Go on!" the referee commanded. The audience roared like great surf. He could hear Jim: "Come on! Finish it, Angie!"

With something like a sob Angelo stepped in; spread his feet apart; jiggled with his left hand an instant; let his right go.

The manager had sent the seconds out of the dressing-rooms. He faced the new champion.

"For God's sake, what's eating you? You're pining like a sick cow. Will you brace up? He must have hit your bean so hard in one of the early rounds that he knocked your brains out." Then, "For God's sake keep out!" he roared as some one knocked at the door.

Jim MacSherry came in. Alec followed. Then Tom. Then Pa MacSherry. Then Baby Joe. Then—Angelo stood in a sort of panic—then Kate, Kate in furs and hat, as he had never seen her before; and there were tears in her eyes and a smile on her face. Jim stepped up.

"Well, Angelo, old kid! Well, you did it!"

"Oh, Jim! I'm sorry!"

"What're you sorry for? Forget it!"

"I'm sorry!" He turned to Kate. "I'm sorry!" And for the second time in his life he began to cry.

Baby Joe cackled. "Look at that guy! What do you know about that? Just like the night he licked Sims—"

"You let him alone, Joe MacSherry!" Kate had stepped forward and put her arm about Angelo. "You let him alone, or you'll have to do with me."

“We’ll have another fight, Angie?” Jim asked.
“You’ll give me another chance.”

“He’ll give you as many as you want,” Kate answered. “And he’ll do the same to you again, Jim.”

Old Pat MacSherry smiled. What did it matter? It was all in the family.

VIII

SARGASSO SEA

WESTWARD from the Azores and northward from the Canaries, Sargasso Sea lies—"the port of missing ships"—a vast expanse of green islets and islands and continents. Weed shows green like emeralds and rises out of the water like the grass of a meadow trailing to the wind. It might be a new-born continent, or an old, forgotten one, so far does it stretch and so lonely is it. Brendan, the Irish saint and mariner, on his way westward searching for Paradise, returned after plowing for one day through it. "A barren place it seemed to him," the folk-stories say—"without music, without company, without wrestling and mellow ale; a prison for lost souls."

And this vast meadow of green weed—beneath which lost Atlantis sleeps—was, according to old Punic writers, a vast trap set by malign gods jealous of the explorations of men. They spoke of it as drawing the ships of the African mariners into it as by a magnet. Even great galleys, with two banks of oars, could do nothing against it. The men strained and tottered and died at their posts. The galleys lay lifeless and silent, like an old captain's fancy on his green lawn. And then, at first little by little and then faster and faster, huge trailing weeds crept over it with the tortuous motions of snakes. They spun themselves into a web and covered the vessel from high carved prow to low round stem until nothing re-

mained except a monstrous mound on which a stray albatross might alight.

Weeds rose high and implacable until by sheer weight they drove the ship down inch on inch and deck on deck; until prow and spars and masts were thrust beneath the waters and it wafted downward through the layers of the ocean as a dead leaf flutters from a tree; until it rested among the spires of the lost city. And again the weed became as smooth as a carpet and as green as a great layer of emeralds. And the sun played on it with a seductive iridescent shimmer. And the trap was opened again.—*Author's Note.*

I

The little stocky Scotch captain looked at the lean six-footer sitting at his desk and laughed.

"We were coming along fine," he grinned, "ship-shape and Bristol fashion, southerly winds and a calm sea, when, just off Hatteras, it lammed into us. It was the navigator's watch in the morning and the sleet came in like fog. It hit us right and left and center, the worst thing I'd seen in twenty years. But—man alive!—she just punched into it and lifted to it, and sparred like a boxer, while I was hanging on in the pilot-house wondering whether they were going to collect my life-insurance."

Martin looked at the Scotchman with a wistful sort of smile.

"And you're off in the morning?" he said.

"Off to Barrancas, up the Orinoco. Touch at St. Kitts and Trinidad; after Barrancas, down to the Plate; up to Santiago, and then to San Francisco; then back."

Martin looked through his window to where the East River flowed southward to the harbor, like a piece of silver ribbon. Again he smiled his smile, which was half humor and half regret.

"I wish I was going with you," he said.

The little Scotchman glanced at him quizzically.

"Ah, go on!" he said. "You're joking. You're too comfortable here to want to go sailing again."

"I'd like to go, though," Martin repeated.

"You'll never go to sea again." The Scotchman shook his head. "You'll stay on, making money until you're a millionaire. You'll never see Sandy Hook from your own bridge again, or shoot the sun and fight with the mate over it. Your last light's raised, Edward."

Two years ago Captain Edward Martin used to complain that a ship's bridge was too small for those long legs of his. He wanted to get ashore, he said, and stretch them. But now that they were on shore they were more cramped than ever, and he longed for a flying bridge again, where he could brace them to the pitch and roll.

But, even after two years, you could never have mistaken Edward Martin for anything but a seaman. He walked with that steady, slow, and slightly rolling step that years of balancing to a heaving deck had made natural. His gray eyes were deep-set and furrowed, with drooping lids—the eyes of a man who is accustomed to looking forward into colorless distances. He stood upright, with chest thrown well forward, as one will after continuous breasting to the head winds of three oceans. Apart from that, he might have been a professional wrestler, so heavily set were chest and shoulders on a bull neck. His face was as brown as that of an Indian, and the closely

cropped fair hair and eyebrows, bleached by the sun, stood out like splashes of white against the tan.

You would hardly have called him a handsome man; his jaw was too powerful for that, his eyes too intense, and there was that little flattening and dent to the nose, and a deep scar under the right eye which the swing of a treacherous boom had inflicted early in his sailing days. And his voice was too sonorous and somewhat loud; and his hands were too big and tanned and freckled; and his eyes were too piercing and straight for the comfort of any man who was not sincere from the heart up.

It was Nellie Martin who first gave him the sobriquet of the Arctic Bear, in illusion to that almost snow-like growth of hair on him and to his huge, powerful look. But apart from those terrific shoulders and compact, lithe legs and arms, the things that stood out most about him were his spotless physical cleanliness, as though he had been holy-stoned and swabbed, and that dawn-like smile of his, which broke at the corners of the large, firm mouth and rose to the deep furrows of the eyes, and seemed to show itself in his ears and chin with its all-embracing, comradely happy glow.

They talk about him in every part of the world—able-bodied seaman and quartermaster, and master mariner—in every place where shipmen gather: in the cafés of the Plate; in seamen's homes in New York and Liverpool; in spotless Nipponese tea-houses; and on drowsy Pacific beaches. The Arctic Bear they call him, giving him that love-name of his wife's. For every profession there is a man on a pinnacle—not the greatest or the most efficient, but the most appealing.

And little by little to the merchant service Captain Edward Martin became the man each man would

like to be. There was about him the flavor of romance and valor. He was a Viking, a man from the North, coming down, laughing, to battle with the sea. And the stories they told about him were not the great exploits of his career, but the characteristic side-lights that appealed to their strong, sane taste. There was little said of the occasion when, off the treacherous Horn, he had rescued the crew of the Portuguese bark, the *Joanna Vaz*, icebergs crashing about him with a noise like artillery, and a white frosting fog covering everything like the mist from a witches' caldron.

Nor do they speak of the time when he carried the *Maid of Perth* a hundred miles across the Caribbean, with a sprung section, to beach her at St. Thomas, riding her as a skilful horseman would tend a foundering mount, bringing her along by masterly navigation and sheer strength of will.

But they tell of the blustering March day when, beating up from Trinidad, off the Bermudas, a negro quartermaster fell overboard. Martin was over the taffrail of the boat deck like a harpoon from a gun. The crew saw him crashing through the oily roll like a power-boat. They saw him grabbing at the whirling black figure as an entomologist makes passes at a fluttering butterfly. Waves rose and fell, and showed and shut off the scene in queer dramatic flashes. At last they saw Martin catch an arm, catch the neck, encircle the body. They looked on horrified as the quartermaster fought despairingly for a strangle-hold while the captain slowly throttled him into unconsciousness. They watched Martin hold on to the sailor for twenty minutes until a rescue-boat reached him.

"Wring that fool out and put him in his bunk," he said quietly when they came aboard. He changed

his clothes and took his place on the bridge. Next day, after docking at Newport News, he gave an order to the mate.

“All men on deck who can’t swim!” he directed.

And in that raw March blast, with cold rain falling, he taught them for three days. He had them thrown in and dragged out. With a cold, firm eye he stood on the hurricane-deck, whistle in hand, and drilled them until they could keep afloat. And none held any rancor.

You may not hear this story—for there are seamen who do not know it—but wherever you speak of Edward Martin they will remember December, 1900, when Martin, then first mate in steam, wrestled Abdul Yussuf, the Anatolian, at a theater in Liverpool. Hosea Judd, a quartermaster on Martin’s ship and a well-known New England wrestler, took up the Anatolian’s challenge that he would throw any man in the world. In the stage box sat Martin and his friends. It ended very shortly. A few minutes’ desultory spar and the Turkish giant wrapped himself about the New England sailor like a python and crushed him slowly to the ground. It was a marvelous exhibition of strength. It was a clean-cut victory. They led the quartermaster away, dazed and shaking from the crushing force of the champion’s great limbs. But Abdul Yussuf made a mistake. He laughed.

Martin’s friends never knew exactly how it happened, but a moment later Martin was on the stage, rather white, very firm, with his great jaw set. He wasn’t insanely angry. His pride had been touched. Attendants led him to a dressing-room and he reappeared in snug-fitting red tights. And as the packed music-hall looked at his sleek, rippling muscles, at his tremendous barrel of chest and trunks of upper

arms, and at the slender, cleanly muscled legs, they gasped; and Abdul Yussuf's face lost its smile.

They touched hands perfunctorily. The referee stepped between, a grotesque figure in evening dress beside the brown Oriental giant in the blue tights and the white Occidental athlete in the red. Overhead a lamp threw its sinister greenish flare. The house became a still, breathless thing, for it had sensed a real contest. Performers left their dressing-rooms to stand in the wings and gape.

They sparred for a hold for a minute, breaking ground, retreating, advancing, circling, making quick unexpected movements, like dogs at play. Their feet pattered on the padded mat with a strange, eerie rhythm.

Once the Turkish wrestler caught the seaman's shoulders for an instant, but Martin shook him off as a big dog might a little one. Once Martin slipped his arm about the Turk's great neck and held it there, with a chancery hold that was like a vise; but the crafty, mat-wise veteran slipped from it with a deft heave of shoulder. They fell to the mat together and pawed at each other like cats striking. They stood up again. Suddenly Yussuf made a deliberately false move. He raised his guard, feinting to a head hold on Martin. The sailor dodged and plunged in.

There was a brown flash and pirouette as the Turk slipped away from him. Martin came down on hands and knees. Yussuf sprang forward like a panther. His hands flashed underneath Martin's arms, slipped about the neck, and caught. It was a full Nelson.

"That's the end!" the house said pityingly.

For that had been the end of the elder Zbyszko; and of Melesinoff the Russian Bear; and of Marie-los, who was called the Terrible Greek. Yussuf would hold a man helpless like that, his great fore-

arms leaning on the neck, until he became weak. A quick twist after that and Yussuf's opponent would be on his back. It was a pity, they said—the fine white sailor!

But they did not turn to go out. There would be an exhibition of gameness worth seeing, they judged. They watched Yussuf kneeling sidewise by Martin, exerting every ounce of his two hundred pounds of clean bone and sinew to the hold.

Suddenly Martin gave a gigantic heave. There were two sharp cracks, as of wood breaking, which the first row of the stalls heard. The Turkish wrestler rolled backward to the footlights. Martin stood up and advanced with whitened face to the center of the mat. His right arm hung limp. A vast torrent of cheers broke in the hall like the thunder of a great waterfall. It made the walls of the house tremble and vibrated the bass drum. The referee stood forward and looked at Martin's shoulder. He raised his hand.

"Match discontinued!" he announced in a wild, enthusiastic yell. "Martin smashed his shoulder and collar-bone in breaking Yussuf's full Nelson."

For a long time at sea they will tell of that wonderful night in Liverpool—of the roaring audience; of the wild cheering at the docks. He didn't beat Abdul Yussuf—no man on earth has done that—but he smashed through the great Anatolian's most deadly hold, even though he did break his own bones like matchwood. That is the sort of thing that seamen like.

And as the little Scotch captain looked about the office, with its soft green carpet and its shining mahogany desk and letter-file—at the shaded electric lamp and the glass-incased maps on the wall—he wondered to himself how a man who had done the

things that Edward Martin had done could ever be content to spend his days cooped up like a guinea-pig in a hutch. Did he never feel homesick for a heaving bridge and a smashing nor'wester? Did he never want to get the salt tang of the sea and hear the cry from bows or crow's-nest, and the clang of the ship's bell?

He shook his head and rose to go.

"Well, I'm glad to have seen you, Edward," he said, "and to hear everything's well with you."

"And I'm glad to have seen you," Martin replied heartily. "I'm always glad to see you, and to hear of you, and know how you're doing."

And as he went off a queer deserted feeling came over Martin. One by one they were dropping away—the old craftsmen of his guild; and in spite of everything the days were becoming lonely.

II

I can understand, as I sit here and think about it, how Edward Martin failed. In another day and another country he would have succeeded, beyond all doubt. He had strength, he had brains. He saw the colorful romance of commerce. There was in him the stuff of Marco Polo; of the merchant princes of Tyre who brought diamonds from Africa to trade for tapestries in Ispahan; of the Phenician traffickers who carried ivory and peacocks into England and brought back honest tin from the Cornish mines. And he had done this.

He knew ports in Persia where many a choice shipment of turquoise could be picked up. In Java he could bargain for sugar-cane and coffee. He knew where in the West Indies sponges could be got at least cost; where in China the best-flavored tea was.

Even in Iceland he could find friends who would direct him to where he could secure eiderdown.

The thing appealed to him. He had something of the explorer's spirit and something of the hunter's. Commerce, other things being equal, would be a sort of sport to him, as fishing is to one man and football to another. He was keen enough to see opportunities and seize them. And everybody was a friend of his, as much for his straight, unbending sense of justice and honor as for his huge bulk and huge personality and winning smile.

And it was his sense of the romance of commerce that led Martin to resign his post with the Frith Line and to buy, out of his savings—with many mortgages, it is true—the *City of Boston*, that serviceable two-thousand-ton tramp, in which he beat about for rare cargoes round the world, bringing home copra from the South Seas and singing-birds from the Canaries, Madeira wines and Bornese spices. He accepted commissions to take supplies to Madagascar; to bring cargoes of pine from Bergen. And old John Ryan, whose days as broker extended back to the time when he sold the tea and coffee that were brought home in clipper-ships out of the East, made the sales for him, got the orders, attended to insurance, port dues, pilot fees—was, in short, the office force of a one-ship line.

It was in Buenos Aires, in the Sportsman Café, that Martin met Becker, the greatest commercial gambler of his day. Old John Ryan had auctioned his last cargo, and they had sent him back to Ireland, to sleep in the country he had been unable to see for sixty years. Martin had heard of it only the day before.

"I don't know what I'll do!" he told Becker.

"Do?" the promoter rasped in that truculent voice

of his. His slate-gray eyes half closed in contempt. He took a vicious hold of the cigar between his teeth. "Do? There's nothing to do but go on and make a million. Make two! Have as much as you want."

"What do you mean?" Martin asked in astonishment; he looked at the promoter as though the man had suddenly gone mad.

"Look a-*here!*" Becker leaned forward with his jaw thrust out. "You have been picking up these cargoes and putting it all over the regular guys in the trade. You know the stuff; you know where to get it; you know who's got it. You made a good thing out of it up to now, piking along as you did."

"Piking?" Martin laughed.

"Yeah, piking. That's what I said. There's a millionaire made once every twenty years. You got it coming to you. Go out and take it up."

"Yes; but how?"

The man's manifest contempt had stung Martin. He wanted him to outline his idea; and then he would show him how little he knew of the sea, and seamen and sea trade.

"Why don't you think, man?" Becker snarled, with his wry grin. "You've got a ship now and are making money. If you had three you'd have three times as much. You know the game. Charter a couple more and stay at home and direct the business. Hire four. Somebody'll trust you. If you can't pay for them, give your note. Sit tight and draw to your hand. Take a chance. Once in a while you'll lose, but three times in four you win. Go to it!"

"But they wouldn't trust me!" Martin said weakly.

The gambler was rising from the table. He leaned forward.

"Listen to me," he said earnestly: "a square guy's

word's as good as a million in the bank. I'd lend you money on that proposition, myself."

What appealed to Edward Martin about the idea were the factors of power and sport in it; the romantic glamour of it. And, because he knew nothing of affairs, he saw himself sitting in an aery among the sky-scraper crags, moving ships to and fro as a chess-player moves pawns, discovering an opportunity here and an opportunity there, and sending his men to make the most of it. The battle against commerce attracted him as much as the battle against the sea. If what Becker had said about the credit was true, it could be started. And if that first proposition was demonstrated to be true, why shouldn't its logical deductions be true, likewise?

And suddenly, as it had taken a million men before him, the glamour of New York caught him as by hypnosis. He saw in fancy, as he beat out to sea from the Plate northward, the vision of the city rise before him: a dim, misty haze of huge buildings, like an enchanted island described by Scheherazade, spire and dome and minaret, white and mauve and gold, breaking in the spring dawn; the huge bulk of the Statue of Liberty looming up before it, massive and brazen, like some petrified giantess set there to guard it against hostile armadas; and the great clanging noises that rang through it, like the noises of a Titan's smithy. Power and energy radiated from it like an electric storm. To be in it! To be of it! The idea had power over him as a magnet has power over iron.

And then he allowed his thoughts to wander from the clanging clamor of battle to a sweeter and equally seductive prospect. He thought of the ship-owners and brokers he knew, and of their riches and luxury; their purring cars; their homes in the white palaces

in upper Manhattan. Nellie would enjoy it. He saw Nellie every moment. He saw her in this city again, and this wealth, as a queen enjoying her inheritance.

“And if there’s any woman ever deserved it,” he said to himself as he leaned back in his chart room, “if there’s ever a woman, it’s she! And by Heaven, she’ll have it!”

III

If ever I meet a man who does not believe in a future world I shall introduce him to Helen Martin. Life throbs through that small muscular body as blood throbs through an artery; it radiates from her finger-tips like electricity from the terminals of a Leyden jar. And when I think of that small frame lying sometime inert and lifeless! The force that sets it throbbing and quick—where would it go?

There are few people who could describe Helen Martin, because her physical contours seem not to matter at all. What matters it that this hundred pounds’ weight of humanity is nothing but a human dynamo? Rob her of that life and you have a small woman, a very small woman, with colorful gray eyes; black, sleek hair, and not too much of it, parted on the side and brought to a cluster of inky curls, like grapes, above the back of her neck; thirty-six sound and serviceable teeth; a clean-cut profile with a low, broad brow; a nose that tilted impertinently; a mouth half open with eagerness; a proud toss to the chin. Not much, when all is said, but the force and vigor of it seemed a miracle. It showed in the defiance of her eyes; in the laugh on her lips; in her rapid, hurrying stride; in her challenging bearing. It showed when people turned to look at her wherever she went. They called that magnetism, trying to put

in a figure of kinetic ions what was the living formula of life.

I like to think of the day he met her, and how. He was in New York on one of his very short stays, walking early in the morning through Central Park. On one of the narrow bridle-paths he saw a sixteen-hand bay thundering along. The dramatic contrast of the small black figure on the huge gelding startled him. Suddenly an auto let its siren blare agonizingly along the Speedway, a harsh, rising snarl like that of an infuriated dog. The bay stopped in its stride and pivoted about on its hind legs.

"She'll be killed!" Martin gasped.

He flashed across the half-acre of brown grass between him and the bridle-path like a beagle after a hare. He took the iron railing like a hurdle sprinter. Up the path the bay started like a bullet from a gun. Martin ran forward as though in a race with it. The gelding's hoofs thundered like the pitapat of big drums. The great head and foaming mouth drew up to him. He caught at the bridle suddenly with a quick, cat-like movement of hand, and dragged at it, fearing all the time that under his weight and pull the thing would break. Gravel spurted up beneath his feet and the horse's hoofs like water from a spring. Suddenly the bay stopped. Martin turned round to the rider, and his face fell.

The rider was looking at him in angry wonder. Her black eyebrows were raised in an angle. Her eyes frowned at him. Her slender chin was set.

"What on earth is wrong with you?" she demanded, and her tones wakened Martin like an icy shower. "Are you mad?"

He faltered with embarrassment. He thought he was doing a humane action—saving a woman from death, it might be. And as he looked he noticed her

easy seat, lying back in the saddle as in an arm-chair, heels down, hands gripping the horse like a vise, elbows well in. All he had done, for all his good intentions, was to interrupt a young amazon on her morning gallop.

"I don't know," he said. "I don't know. I'm afraid I made a fool of myself."

He looked up at her again, and he saw that the anger had left her face and a sort of humorous gravity had replaced it. He felt he ought to say something and fumbled for words.

"My name . . ." he stumbled.

And he fished a card from his pocket and handed it to her. She thrust it into her glove calmly. There was a twinkle in her eye.

"Thank you," she said; "and thank you, too, for your good intentions. Good morning."

She brought her crop down lightly on the bay's flanks and was off with a drumming of hoofs.

"I made an ass of myself," Martin told himself again and again, and tried to put the thing from his mind; but there remained with him, to haunt him all the time, a mental photograph of a fiery young woman of twenty-two on top of a gigantic bay horse, in black riding-habit and derby hat.

Three days later he got a note inviting him to her father's house to tea. He put on his best shore clothes. He had been a little put about to find that the woman he had proposed rescuing was the daughter of Alan Wingate the coffee man; and he had felt ill at ease at sight of the big house on Park Avenue, with its fine grilled doorway, and its portraits of the Alan Wingates of six generations staring mellowly from the walls.

"Here," he said optimistically, "is where I make an ass of myself again."

And he was not sure that he didn't—and many times, at that—for all that afternoon, until the violet incandescent lamps began to radiate in the streets, she led him to talk about himself, and his life and his voyages.

I like, also, to think of how they were married. He had gone on courting her when in the city, and writing to her when at sea, in his blundering, lumbering way. It might have been merely a flirtation to her, so happy did she seem about it, and so much did she enjoy teasing him, except for the occasional lyrical flashes of trust and passion on her part that could be nothing else but love.

"We'd better see about getting married," he remarked casually on one of those rare afternoons on Fifth Avenue. "I think I'll talk to your father."

"We'd better think . . ." She laughed—a ricocheting burst of low melody, as from some wind-instrument.

"Yes," he went on seriously; "I think I'll see your father."

He went in to Alan Wingate in a truculent way, expecting a stern and angry resistance. The gray old coffee man looked at him questioningly over his half-moon spectacles.

"I want to marry your daughter," Martin said.

"And why shouldn't you?" Wingate asked. "If she will have you! The only objection is that she has no money. I'm on the verge of bankruptcy and I have only enough for myself."

And that was the end of obstacles.

The sailors liked the happy, care-free way of Martin's bride. They liked her habit of taking a liner down to Buenos Aires, to meet him on the dock when he had finished beating down the East Coast. They liked her going to Marseilles to receive him

when he had come up from Calcutta, through the Red Sea.

The sailors liked to see that small, trim lady standing on a pier-head, waiting for them as the freighter was maneuvered, with tinkling bells and throbbing engines and hoarse shouts from bridge to stern, into her appointed dock. And to Nellie Martin were accorded things lacking in the treatment of ambassadors on ocean liners.

And if they liked the same things and had the same virtues, the same joyful outlook on life, the same frank sincerity and sense of honor, they had the same fault—she perhaps in a greater degree. They had an enthusiasm that flamed like lambent fire; an enthusiasm that was given always to fine ideals. There was nothing judicial about their outlook on life. They were either all for a thing or all against it. Consequently when Martin came back, with his imagination thumping like an engine over the suggestion of the promoter Becker, and unfolded the scheme to her, she jumped at it as a cat jumps for a mouse.

“And you’ll be at home all the time then!” she said joyfully. “And we’ll be rich!”

“Yes,” he said, more restrainedly; “we’ll be pretty well off.”

“And we’ll have one of those big gray limousines,” she went on, “that go gliding along, with flowers in them; and a box at the opera; and a place in the country—and we’ll have everybody we know down!”

And after two years they were, as Martin put it, pretty well off. They had nothing like his wife’s dream of luxury, but they had attained a wholesome material prosperity. He found Becker’s statement to be true—that a good name is as potent, if not more so, than a heavy bank balance. He found, at least for

the first year, that everybody was ready to help him; enthusiastic in the launching of a new commercial adventure, savoring its risks and glories vicariously. It was not hard to charter vessels and to get commissions, though bottoms were scarce, especially as the war went on.

And for a while it was a great adventure to be on dry land and to do business on it—as great an adventure as a landsman's first long voyage to sea. It was something past belief to lie for more than two weeks in a comfortable bed instead of in a cramped cabin, and to sleep continuously without the interruption of being called on the bridge to combat a typhoon in the China Sea or a tornado in the Caribbean or to out-strategy the crushing, treacherous swell of Biscay Bay.

And New York, too, was an adventure by itself—the color on Fifth Avenue; the rush and hustle of Broadway; the queer quiet squares here and there, like an archipelago of green islands in a gray waste; the brooding, deserted look of the avenues to the extreme east and west; the green street-cars, like exotic beetles; the thundering gallop of elevated trains; the thrill of the subway, like some dangerous catchpenny in an amusement park; the people flashing past, tight-lipped, keen, efficient, doing something every minute. And, above all, that sense of growing, of the metropolis spreading and towering like a wonderful plant; the nervous crash and rattle of monster drills; the scream of cranes; dull detonations of dynamite; iron girders clanging, joint by joint; the sputter of arc-lights as men worked past midnight to the morning, raising at every street corner a tower higher than the one the sons of Noe built on a plain in the land of Sennaar.

"Ah, there is life here," Martin would say to himself in that first year, "and progress here; and the sea is monotonous and never changes."

IV

And for two years Martin believed in New York as the mammoth canvas he had painted, with the calm faith in which a devotee accepts a dogma. He had succeeded. The vague unrest and desire for action that swept over him at times, his irritability, he took as defects in his own character and disciplined himself accordingly. The luxury Nellie Martin had spoken of was now in part hers, with the comfortable apartment on Seventy-ninth Street and the big eight-cylinder car. She had been a good prophet, he thought, as he walked up and down his drawing-room after dinner. Suddenly Nellie, sitting strumming the piano, turned to him with a gasp.

"Why, Ned, you're nervous!" she said.

He stopped in his stride.

"Nervous!" he laughed. "I haven't any nerves."

"Oh yes you have!" she shot back at him. "And you've been going on like this for weeks, prowling up and down like a hyena in a cage and snapping your fingers. You ought to see a doctor."

"I don't want a doctor," he said irritably.

But the thing rankled. He remembered what a White Star man had said to him when they were talking of New York.

"It's the most wonderful city in the world!" Martin had exclaimed. "In London they dawdle and in South America they laze. Here it's all hustle and go."

"Here it's all hysteria and nerves," the White

Star man had countered. "They make five spasmodic jumps while a sane man would take two long strides. Oh, wait and see! In a year or so you'll be nervous, yourself. You'll be buzzing like an electric wire."

And he was already nervous. He thought, with a feeling of disgust, of the men who had to drink to steady themselves; of the men who had to go to sanatoriums; of the men who collapsed at their desks. It worried him.

And on top of this came the incident of the man in Cedar Street—a pale, thin man, with a colorless face and long fingers, and the eyes of a beaten dog. His clothes were shabby, and he looked up and down the street with a queer, hunted look. Martin stopped by his side.

"I beg your pardon," Martin said. "Is there anything wrong? Can I do something for you?"

"Can you do something for me?" the man queried. "You can do something for me. You can stake me to a square meal."

"Let's go in here," Martin nodded quickly.

He sat and smoked while the other ate ravenously. He waited, a little embarrassed. He wanted to know whether he could help out.

"What is wrong?" he asked kindly.

"Oh, nothing new!" the man answered. "Only a bum who tried to make a fortune. There's lots of us."

"But there's no need to get discouraged," Martin argued. "There's always opportunity."

"I'm afraid you're a bit green to this city," was the faintly sneering criticism. "For one rich man there's a hundred bums—like me. For one millionaire there's a thousand down-and-outers." He waved away the offer of a drink. "I had a little money once, myself, but it went." He paused for a minute. "You get a little and you think you're all right, and

then all at once you're left in the lurch." He smiled bitterly. "Where are the millionaires of a few years ago?"

Martin thought for a minute. Ancient magnetic names flashed through his mind. Yes; where were they?

The man rose to go. He reached for his hat.

"Isn't there some way I can help you?" Martin asked. "Tell me. With work? With money?"

"I'm afraid I've tried too often to start again," he replied; "and the name of money sickens me. There's lots of us, I tell you, down on the Battery, up in Madison Square, in the bread line; old millionaires there, too. We're played out and haven't got the nerve to die. Thanks for the meal, and I hope you'll get past all right."

He left. The encounter struck Martin with a sense of fright. That was another thing he couldn't forget.

And little by little these minor causes, incidents, worries, culminated in a depression that hung over him like a cloud. He found himself brooding time and time again on the thought of the sea, reliving old experiences and sailing old routes. A great nostalgia for it came on him and for the dangers of it that he knew—not like those of his present medium, which were hidden and sinister. When he was not doing that, he was recapitulating in his mind the things that the poor down-and-outer had told him, and fearing second-hand terrors. What if fortune should go back on him? One ship of his was loading in Greenland with oil, and another in Santos with coffee; and his own old boat, the *City of Boston*, was coming up from Argentina with hides.

What if something should happen to any or to all of them? It would nearly ruin him, on so close a margin was he operating. And he would be as one of

those mushroom rich men, springing up in one night and next day being trampled in the gutter. Or, if that didn't happen, would he become a vague, amorphous thing, plethoric with money, and everything worth living for lost? And again he would think of the sea and hear the chime of waves.

Another canker ate him: he was becoming lonely. In this new life his wife had become a little parted from him. She had met new people and was interested in them, and it seemed rare for them to be alone now. The men they were beginning to know were men whose jargon of money and trade Martin spoke falteringly, and they knew little of the sea and its great traditions. The women of the set looked on him as a sort of curiosity, with his big frame and old reputation. He wished he were back on the sea, where she, and she alone, would be waiting for him, radiant and happy, on the pier, and clear to his eyes as the stars he steered by. But that was over!

But in those old days, empty as his wife's life was, it was wholesome. She had held herself aloof from this hectic rush of amusement because her husband was not with her. She had occupied herself with the old and tried friends of his family and hers, gentle Old World people who had mapped out life clearly for themselves, and who followed their course as undeviatingly as a quartermaster follows the compass. She had been coming to him, her mind filled with the thought of him, her heart singing at the prospect of the meeting.

It had come on her gradually—this change, this widening of vacuous interests. It had come with the stealthiness and silence of a cat. There had first been her new home, which she was so proud to show to her old friends and her new. And the old ones, disconcerted by the sight of the new luxury and mo-

dernity, fell away little by little in their visits; and the new ones grew more in intimacy and number.

There had been calls to return, and new engagements made at them. In a month, it seemed, she was in the middle of the vortex, as a coracle spins about the rim of the maelstrom—at a lunch here; at a tea there; taking him to dine with people he had hardly met and whom she expected him to like immediately; at a theater; at a lecture; on Fifth Avenue; at a dance; at a bazaar; playing bridge. At first it had been merely an exciting prospect to dip into activities like this. Then it had become a duty. Then a habit. She did not seem to have an hour unoccupied—and she was doing nothing.

That was not life, he said to himself as he looked on in amazement. Life was not amusement. Life was not a thing to be frittered away. "No! by God!" he swore; and he crashed fist into palm with a sound like a gun exploding. Life was—life. A sweet, sane, strong thing, regular as the moon's rising and the setting of suns, clear as air, healthy as rain, strong as a great gale; not a thing of electric light in the daytime, of looking into shop windows, of hysterical music and fetid rooms. No!

But what could he do about it? He could not argue with his wife, for she would defeat him with her woman's wit—the weapon that had defeated Samson, who was the strongest man in Israel. There was nothing to do but send his fist crashing into her jaw and carry her away. And one didn't do that sort of thing to a woman.

He was sitting one evening, with a paper in his hand, looking out through the window of his apartment. It was a warm May night, and an indefinable glamour from somewhere outside the city had stolen in. He turned to the column of shipping news and

read down it. No boat he knew had come in that day. In the second part he started. "S.S. *Drake* sailed for Cape Town," he read. The *Drake* with Johnnie Cope on board; and he had never come to the office!

The thing cut him to the heart like a surgeon's lancet. Why, what could it mean? They were all deserting him—all the old comrades! A tale had gone round that he was engrossed in money-making; that he no longer wanted to see the old friends he had made and kept at sea. They looked at him askance, as they looked at other brokers and bankers and business men—people whose ideals and lives they could not understand. A great sense of loneliness swept over him.

V

Very calmly Martin sat in his office and read the two marconigrams that told him of his ruin. He sat crouched forward, elbows on knees, jaw out, brow corrugated, and watched the panorama of the harbor stretch before him in the afternoon haze. Occasionally he glanced at the messages:

Martha Washington ashore off Orkneys. Crew safe.

KENTON.

That was the vessel bringing oil from Greenland. There was no hope for that, he knew. He could imagine the low, lean oiler being pounded to shreds on the crags and needles of the bleak Scotch coast.

"Thank God they're all safe!" he muttered.

He could see the oil calming the waves, except for the tremendous roll and sickening after-tow, and the battle of the crew to reach shore. He took the second message from behind the first:

Rammed in fog by Caldwell liner. Settling. Revenue cutter standing by. No chance salvage.

McCREADY.

And this was the *Pasquale Gomez*, coming up from Santos with coffee. She was gone, too, the good old Clyde-built hussy that had withstood shoal and storm—to be smashed in a fog off the Gulf Stream! And all hands were safe, with the cutter standing by. There could be no blame on the captains, he knew: Kenton and McCready were as careful men as any in the merchant service.

He was looking blindly through the window, thinking of the battles both his men must have had before they gave up hope and abandoned their ships, when the sights and life of the harbor began to impress themselves on his mind as sunlight impresses itself on a sensitive plate.

A line of railroad cars on lighters passed under Brooklyn Bridge like a child's toy gone adrift; a Gloucester schooner, with economically patched sails, made her way upstream attached to a fussy tug; six or seven ferry-boats edged their way from shore to shore, their dirty brown bulks showing, as it were, on a bias; a Booth liner edged backward from her pier; little patches of white cloud puffed from the tug's funnels and a faint black layer of smoke hung round everything; and then suddenly a Cunard boat swept round the Battery, out to sea, running like a greyhound, hoot-hooting impatiently at everything before her, her funnels sloping backward, her lines running fine and free, as from a painter's brush.

Martin could imagine her course out to sea, with the mechanism of long experience—the skimming through the Narrows; the halt to drop the pilot; the monotonous ringing on Scotland Light-ship. Suddenly he straightened up.

"That finishes it!" he said; and he walked out of his office.

He went uptown; and as he went his mind ran on his affairs, and he docketed, ledgered, and balanced roughly. He was only partially covered by insurance, and, except from the majority ownership in his own old boat, lying unloading at its Brooklyn pier, he was ruined. There were a few thousands in the bank and he could raise enough to start him again as he used to be—his own master on his own vessel, beating up and down the world on his own affairs.

A great sense of relief came over him. Subconsciously again he could hear the farewell tolling of the light-ship and the first crash of the Atlantic against his bows. He had been ashamed, too, sitting there in his office, of having Kenton and McCready standing on their bridges, tight-lipped and grim, and fighting with life and soul for his property and his men, while he was grubbing at a desk—grubbing for money!

"No more of that, thank God!" said he.

His wife rose as he swung into that small drawing-room, almost to whose ceiling he towered. She threw down the periodical in her hand and faced him with an instinctive look of fear.

"Ned!" she cried out. "Is anything wrong?"

She walked forward until he faced her. He looked at her straight between the eyes. There was a wry smile to his mouth.

"Nothing serious," he snapped. "The *Martha Washington* was lost off the Orkneys and the *Pasquale Gomez* was run down in a fog."

"Oh, God!" she said in a strained whisper. "And everybody?"

"And everybody saved!" He laughed uproar-

iously. "I've lost nothing but money." He threw himself down on a sofa and threw his arm out. "But I've lost all of that," he added.

"Oh, poor Ned!" she said quickly, and slipped down beside him. Her arm went round his neck with a quick, hooking motion, and she held him close for a moment silently. "Oh, poor Ned!"

"So it's rolling down to Rio again for me, old girl," he said; and he smiled. "And you'll come and meet me—"

"Listen!" she remonstrated with a sort of fierceness. "Don't talk about it."

"But I will!" he continued. "The old *City of Boston's* at her dock and I'm off again. And it'll take me only a week to get fitted out and away; and you—"

"Listen, Ned!" she whipped in again. "Don't be a fool! Listen to sense."

He turned round on her with a grin. He liked that flashing, impatient way of hers. He liked to see her face flame into enthusiasm; eyes glinting like lamps; mouth parted; hair quivering as though it breathed; her short, staccato gesture with the left hand, like the downward flick of a cat's paw. She caught the sleeve of his coat.

"You've got to fight it through," she shot at him, with her little jaw lifting. "You've got to fight it and win!"

"I will," he answered with his roaring laugh. "I'm going to take that old boat out and come home—"

"Not with the boat, Ned." She shook her head. "Here, in New York, at the game."

"I won't!" He snapped his teeth. "I can't."

"You will and you can!" She rose in her enthusiasm. Her breath came panting. "You were making a name for yourself, and a fortune. What you did before, you can do again. There's not a man in the

city as much trusted as you are, and everybody will help. Ned, man, you've got to!"

"Even if I can," he growled, "I don't want to. I'm sick of it. I want the sea." He shoved forward his immense, powerful hands. "I want something to do," he said again. "This is no man's job."

"Listen, Ned!" She bent over him. "When you were on a ship you were only a master mariner—one human being in five oceans. Here in New York you are one of the coming men in the trade. In ten years the steamers of the Martin Line will be on every sea and in every port. That's a man's job, Ned. A big man's job!"

He faltered a moment before answering. Her quick shifting attack had taken him by surprise. His eyes narrowed and his chin grew rugged as he thought that over.

"Yes," he said; "it is a man's job—a big man's job." He rose. "But it's not mine."

He walked toward the window. Suddenly he swung about.

"Listen!" he said fiercely. "I'm through. I'm fighting a game I don't know. I'm trying to make a fortune in a rat-pit—jumping for it like a terrier dog. There's no luck to it. I'm through!"

She said nothing. She stood slim and erect, like a statue on a pedestal. Her calm eyes rested on his hot ones with a steady, unwavering glance.

"I'm trying to make money overnight—a life's work. It can't be done. I'm a seaman, captain of steam and sail; and I'm going back to it. And you'll go back to the old friends and the old interests. Get your things ready, Nellie. This is the end."

He turned toward her with a half-smile. A tenderness dawned in his eyes. She cut it short with a deft, sharp stab.

"I've listened to you, Ned," she began calmly. "Now listen to me! You're not going back. If you've had enough of the land, I've had enough of the sea."

"What?" he broke in dumbfoundedly.

"Enough, Ned!" she went on. "For two years I've let you go out of the harbor with always the fear of never seeing you again. I've waited for you, and watched and prayed for you. I've gone round lonely and I've gone round sad. When you were at home everything was happy, but when you were away it was drab. And now—"

"I'm sorry, Nellie," he said. "A man has to follow his road and a woman must stick to her man."

"It's selfish!" she snapped fiercely. "Drabness, drabness, drabness! Never a dance; hardly a friend; no color; no life. Now I'm enjoying myself—"

"You're wasting yourself, my girl," he said gently. "There's nothing to it at all. You're too good for this. It's as empty as a soap bubble."

"I don't care," she answered. "I won't go back to it."

"You will!" he thundered.

There was a tense, sharp silence in the room, except for their rapid breathing; and then suddenly she drooped as if she had been struck by a hot wind. She leaned on the mantel, turning away to hide the little mist of tears in her eyes.

"Ah, Ned!" she choked softly. "You're going, and everything's going; and the little home—"

He looked at her as she stood there, a drooping, shining figure against the marble mantel. He saw the soft twinkle of her hair and sensed the softness of her skin, like a rose-leaf. She looked more cared for, more beautifully groomed than in the old days two years before. That frock she wore, too: she never could have afforded it then; or the trim, flexible

pumps; or the glimpse of expensive silk at her ankles.

And the room itself, the square room with the soft Chinese carpet, the bright landscapes on the walls, the little peachblow vase that Li Hu, of Macao, had made six hundred years before; against the wall an ancient Norman vestment-holder, carrying on its heavy shelves a dozen curiosities in silver, gold, and bronze. Through glass doors he could see the dining-room, a bright, sunlit place with its array of shining silver and delicate linen. All this was art and comfort and luxury, and she was in the midst of it, owning it, happy!

"We were so happy, mannie dear!" she sobbed.

Ah, she was! And the change would turn all this topsyturvy; would strip her of her expensive clothes; would take her away from the luxuries in which she queened it now. "And she queens it so well," Martin said to himself with a sense of pride. Her objections to going back to the old life were not selfish, he knew; were not for fear of losing comfort and her home, but because she could not see it any other way. It was true, he knew, that he could come back, as the phrase was. Was he fair to her?

"Do go ahead, Ned!" she pleaded. "Don't give up!"

He looked at her again, a part and piece of the room about her; a gentle, soft thing that seemed herself to be the composition of a supreme artist.

"I won't then," he answered her suddenly, and swung out of the room.

He went into his own austere one, clean as a sailor's, simple as a monk's. The moment he had closed the door he knew he had done wrong. He thought, with an immense sense of pity, how tragic it was that the being he loved most in all the world should hang the greatest gyve on him in this prison of his.

"Even that!" he muttered bitterly. "Even that!"
A gust of rage smote him like a nor'easter sweeping southward from the pole.

He went to the window in two swift strides, and swung it open. Outside he could see New York, stretched, street on street and avenue on avenue, like some ancient, undecipherable maze. Dingily everything rose—temple and shop and dwelling, factory and railroad. In the distance the Metropolitan Tower rose gloomily erect. The din of the streets came to him like an insult. He glared out, teeth stripped and shoulders heaving, like a berserker warrior on the rack.

He caught at the jambs of the window; and he felt, as he stood there, that with one heave of his shoulders he could split the vast apartment-house in twain, as Samson wrenched plinth from pillar in the alien temple. Enraged, he spat out on the street. He raised his fist and shook it.

"Hell blast you, root and stock!" he swore savagely; and then, all suddenly, he turned wearily away.

VI

They will tell you—the wise city people—that all this is an old wives' tale, a boggy created by morbid seamen, like that monstrous serpent of which Bishop Pontoppidan tells. And they will point out to you in conclusion that Sir John Murray—in 1910, was it not?—investigated the sea in the *Michael Sars* and found nothing but a stretch of weeds. They will laugh at the idea of anything sinister or malevolent there. But admit the evidence of Patrick Burk, master of the steamship *Connaught Ranger*, now somewhere off the Horn. He told it to me on his bridge

one Mediterranean night, when the sea was like a queen's cloak, and a great saffron moon rose over Africa :

"I was second mate then in the bark *The Kerry Gow*—that was in eighty-three, before you were born, my lad—coming up from the Gold Coast in ballast, when we drifted into it. It was a June morning, and the breeze fell and the sails were licking from jib to mizzenmast. We drifted into it, I say; but I could have sworn that something pulled us along like a hawser to the bows. It came round green and moving, like a horde of morays, and the sun seemed sort of yellow and the air unhealthy. And we still went into it; and no breeze blew. We were in it half an acre, it might be, when together we all jumped for the boats, and overboard, chopped our way out, and lay off for three days until a Greek boat took us up. We never saw *The Kerry Gow* again. But, thank God, we got out of it!"

He was silent for a time, thinking that over, shaking his head as he leaned across the rail. The bell in the pilot-house rang eight and the bell in the bows answered, and the lookout's cry came clear and comforting: "Eight bells and all's well!"

"And all's well!" repeated Burk, slowly and thankfully.

"And all's well!" said I, in a frightened whisper.
—*Author's Note.*

Edward Martin stood among the ruins of his business and looked about him in a sort of daze as a man might return to a house that had been reduced to blackened wood and white ashes by fire; and he considered in himself how best to build again. The manifest thing was to get money, and this he started

blithely out to do. He put his case squarely and bluntly, as a sailor should, showing that his loss was not due to lack of ability or to carelessness, but to that vague, undefinable thing called Act of God, against which neither foresight nor strength prevails.

And some men grew cold at his approach, feeling and fearing that disaster had a backfire like an unexploded bomb, and that the safe policy was not to touch him or his affairs. This type cut him to the quick; for in his sailor's training no man let go by unheeded another's cry for help, and the thing was inexplicable to him. The second type filled him with a deep loathing, as the sight of some slimy thing might. Of the second type was Lewis, the insurance man, to whom he went. He found Lewis sitting in his office in a dim half-light, the faded sun playing unhealthily upon his bald head and giving a sinister depth to his sunken, colorless eyes. The insurance broker rose at sight of him.

"Hello, Captain!" he hailed hollowly, and held out a flabby hand as Martin sat down. "That was fine work!" he said slowly, an unhealthy smile on his face. He pulled out a box of cigars. "Have one?" he offered. "Crews of both ships saved? Very fine! Young Reynolds placed the insurance for you." He smiled again. "I wonder how much."

"Not enough to cover, by a long chalk," Martin replied grimly.

The broker lowered his chin on his chest. His mouth broke into a wide grin. His eyes smiled coyly from under the brows. There was something theatrical about his smile; something studied. It was like the simper of a sneak girl accusing another of flirting. The palm of one hand closed lovingly over the knuckles of the other.

"So they all say," he tittered. "So they all say."

Martin was lighting the cigar. Something in the man's tone grated on him and he looked up to see the suspiciously grinning face. He brought his match slowly down from the tip of his cigar, threw it away, threw the cigar away, pushed the chair backward with a rasp, and stood up. His massive jaw shot out. His eyes flashed suddenly as if an electric current had been turned on and a spark was flicking between terminals. His fists closed until they were like the heads of giant sledges.

"What do you mean?" he bellowed suddenly. His voice thundered out with a roar like that of an enraged bull. It exploded within the walls of the office like heavy gunnery. It made the clerks and stenographers in the outer offices spring to their feet with white faces. "What do you mean?"

"Why . . ." the broker began in scared tones. His hands trembled.

"Say it!" Martin thundered. "Say it, and I'll sling you through the window into the street."

He picked up his hat and gloves and turned to walk out of the office. At the door he paused. He eyed the broker with hotly contemptuous eyes.

"You filthy dog!" he said calmly, and went out.

At his bank he received the first part of his help. Reagan, the vice-president, a dapper, clean-featured, red-haired man of forty, listened to him, all the time boring at him with a gray eye, cold as ice and piercing as a knife. It was the eye with which a judge regards a criminal, when trying to get at the truth. It was the eye with which an expert examines a jewel, hunting for the flaw he fears to find. Its cold, unfriendly light cut at Martin like a whip. Under it his words grew more staccato, his tone resentful, his own eyes angry. He finished quickly and tilted his jaw.

"That's all!" he snapped. "Well?"

Reagan reached for a piece of paper, his eye as cold as before.

"We can't invest all you ask," he said calmly; "but I think I can promise half—on a series of renewal notes."

"Half's no use to me," Martin broke in. "I want it all. And this is the only place I know where to get it."

"Half's all we can do on that," Reagan replied; "but I can make a suggestion. There's a man called Bonner who might help you out on the rest. I'll give you a note. But I warn you he'll want your eye-teeth."

"If he wants them and I want his money," Martin said, "I'll have to hand them over."

The banker began writing. A thin, experienced smile cracked his face.

"I suppose you will," he said, and went on making his large, round characters. "It's a hard game," he continued. "If you've got money, you break even. If you're lending money, you've got a strangle-hold on your man." The lines from his nose to the corners of his mouth deepened and he shook his head. "But if you're borrowing money you've got a faint chance for life, and you've got to make the most of it."

"And you may go down," Martin nodded.

"And you may go up," the banker smiled. "It's the one man in a thousand who goes up to the sky that makes us all hang on."

Martin left the bank with a feeling of elation. It hadn't been so hard, after all. And this man Bonner? Well, the vice-president seemed to think there would be no difficulty. But it came on him gradually, with a sense of chill, that once more he was putting himself under a yoke of responsibility. It would be years be-

fore he was free again. There would be a chain about him that would keep him tied to office and desk until everything was settled up, and meantime something might happen again—another Act of God! Another inexplicable caprice of the sea!

It was late when everything was settled that night, and Nellie, his wife, he knew, would be out; so he stopped at a restaurant on Park Avenue for dinner. As he was passing out—through the bar as it happened—some one hailed him. At the counter he saw Dorgan, a lawyer he had met downtown. He stopped for an instant.

“What’s the good word, Cap?” Dorgan hailed blithely.

Martin stood still for an instant, smiling. He didn’t like the man, but he didn’t want to rush in. If the insurance broker’s eye was leering, and the banker’s cold, Dorgan’s was repellently wise. It gave the impression that the man knew everything that was unsavory and crooked and evil. His face was lean and long and regular; black, carefully groomed hair; blue shaved jowl; his movements quick and nervous. He was a tall, lithe man, and he kept his hands in his side pockets.

“Been round trying to get money,” Martin smiled.

“You’re not wise, Cap,” Dorgan grinned cynically. “You’re not wise.”

“What do you mean?”

“You don’t make easy money nowadays.” Dorgan shook his head. There’s nothing to hard work and little pay. You’ve got to beat the other man to the punch and soak him where he doesn’t expect it.”

“I’m afraid I don’t understand you,” Martin said, puzzled.

“All the top-notchers make their cash in deals,” Dorgan explained. “They don’t sell things for a

profit or on a commission. I was talking to Rob Brown, from Yonkers, to-day. That guy's worth half a million. Say, do you know how he started out? I'll tell you." He paused for an instant to order a drink.

"That guy," he continued, tapping Martin on the shoulder, "that guy got a couple of snow-shoveling contracts from the city. What did he know about shoveling? Nothing. He bid and got them—good fat ones. He snooped round until he found a bunch of guineas with carts and men, and turned them in when the big falls came. Two thousand dollars—ten hours' work! He's a darned smart fellow, is Brown!"

"I see," commented Martin, very coldly.

"Now, do you see? I'll tell you something else: That guy got hold of a publisher with a 'Life of Washington' that wouldn't sell. Five volumes at a dollar; he got them. What does he do? He rounds up a gang of poor muts at the Mills Hotel, Number Seven. He sends them out in the suburbs to offer the set and three magnificent rose bushes for five bones. Fall? Do they fall? They do. He turns up with three slips in flower pots; tells the women they'll grow. Say, that guy found four thousand suckers in thirty days. Set, one dollar; rose bushes, eighteen cents; man's commission, fifty cents. Brains! That guy's got brains!"

"I'm afraid you misunderstand me," Martin started out. "I want to earn money—not to steal it."

And he walked into Thirty-fourth Street with his new enthusiasm dead, still-born in his eyes.

VII

It was hard for Martin to conceal his aversion for the man Bonner from the instant the money-lender entered the office. There seemed to be compounded

in him a mixture of furtiveness and fear, and at the same time a sense of cruelty that was like a malevolent emanation. He was a tall man and thin; and his face, with its fine aquiline cast, its high brow and delicate chin, might have been that of a great jurist had it not been for the twisted thin mouth and the cringing gray eyes.

Martin looked a little curiously at the silk hat, which was dirty and ruffled; at the morning clothes, ill fitting and unpressed; at the straight silver-headed cane and the gloves. He glanced at the curious pallor in the man's face, and somehow the thought came to him that this man spent his days making money from people who hated him, and his nights dissipating it with men who despised him. He felt Bonner's eye take him in with an air of possession, of gormandize, as it were; the eye of an executioner regarding a criminal with morbid pleasure.

"Sit down, Mr. Bonner," he said shortly and sharply. "My business with you is this: I want thirty thousand dollars on the security of my boat—the *City of Boston*—my business, good-will, and anything else I've got."

They sat down together, on opposite sides of the desk. Quickly Martin put his case, a bit truculently, because he did not like the man. His jaw was shot forward, his eyes half closed. He drummed on his desk with his long, blunt fingers. Bonner made labored entries in a small note-book. At last he looked up and smiled—a smile meant to be ingratiating, but which showed as cold and base and thin as the man's self.

"It will cost a lot of money," Bonner said.

"How much money?" Martin snapped back, like a counter to a boxer's lead.

"It will cost you seventy-five hundred for the year."

"Seventy—" Martin nearly leaped from his chair. "Damn it! That's usury. That's twenty-five per cent."

"Money's dear," the lender chuckled. "Money's the dearest thing to buy on earth."

They examined the value of business and goodwill; they went into specifications and inspection reports of the *City of Boston*; they went over bills receivable from importers, and ship-insurance to be paid for the loss of the boats off Scotland and in the Gulf Stream.

"And your life-insurance?" Bonner smiled again. "You carry a life-insurance?"

"I carry a life-insurance for sixty thousand dollars," he answered; "but what has that got to do with it?"

"We'll need a mortgage on that too."

Bonner's smile became something evilly droll, as though he had thought of some mysterious joke.

"But, in Heaven's name, why?"

"Because," Bonner took up again, "if everything went wrong, and your ship sank, and you were ruined, you might commit suicide. Do you see?"

"I see," Martin agreed grimly.

He was silent for an instant, because he was not half sure he would not stop the proceedings then and there and kick the man out of the office.

"And the things in your home, too," Bonner purred on; he resembled nothing so much now as a medieval devil applying refined torture to a sinner. "I want a mortgage on that too."

"You want that too!" Martin's tone was one of cold disgust. "What do you want that for?"

"Because, if anything went wrong—" Bonner smiled again—"your wife might say they belonged to her. Women are more dishonest than men."

Martin rose from his chair, breathing hard. A sudden rush of blood roared to his head like the sound of a cataract. The veins on his temples swelled; his great bull neck pushed against the sides of his collar; his nostrils twitched like those of a fine horse; his mouth twisted and his eyes suddenly became wild, savage things. Bonner rose hastily and crept to the wall.

"Only a little joke, Captain," he cried; "only a little joke!"

The muscles on Martin's shoulders and arms stiffened until they became an arch of living steel. His hands reached out for something to catch. Bonner shrank back and his face became dirty white.

"You wouldn't kill me, Captain!" he whined. "You wouldn't kill me for a little joke!"

"No; I wouldn't kill you," Martin said half consciously. "I couldn't kill you. You're a little man. I wish I could!"

A great spasm of fury shook him like a torrent of sobs, and the muscles were aching with a fierce, painful ache to do something. His hands came in contact with the sides of the great flat-top desk. He caught on it grimly. Suddenly his shoulders went back in a vast spasmodic heave. The great mahogany mass rose as if it were matchwood. He brought it high in the air for an instant and then smashed it, with all his strength, on the floor. It crashed into pieces with a splintering boom.

"The end of all this filth!" he snarled between his teeth.

Two clerks swung open the door and entered the room. They looked aghast at Martin, standing there,

silent and raging. They looked at Bonner, crouching against the wall, beads of sweat on his ashen forehead and his silk hat caught to his breast. With a quivering forefinger Martin pointed the money-lender out to them.

"Take that jackal," he said, "take that jackal and kick it into the street!"

And suddenly he strode out of the office, with his head high and his face flaming.

VIII

He walked up Broadway like that, hat jammed hard on his head, shoulders back, arms swinging, dividing the crowd as the bow of a liner cuts through water. Near Fulton Street a blank and ugly space in the wall confronted him, and he saw in the gap of the building a deep pit, with giant derricks whining and rattling, engines in convulsive spasms, blue, dirty figures running to and fro, and above everything he heard the insistent cry of the drill, a metallic whirling like that of a monstrous dragon-fly, which somehow for a moment suggested a burst of cacophonous tittering. The sight once before had thrilled him. It had seemed like the pulsing of life through the city's arteries; but to-day he saw only an ineffectual movement in it, a convulsion, as of a man stricken by some implacable disease.

"It changes all the time," he thought contemptuously; "and the sea is calm and eternal!"

He turned to the right intuitively and swung down Maiden Lane, past the shops of the jewelers, past the snapping current of Nassau Street, and followed the trail toward the docks. Block by block the way changed. It lost the clean, efficient look of the business section with its neat windows and garnished

streets. At Pearl Street it became dingy and barren, like some No Man's Land; and gradually from then it took on color and warmth.

Here were shops that somehow made his heart glow—queer groceries with jars of olives and rosaries of figs in the window; with dulse from Ireland and pungent Southern fruits. A little farther on a uniform-tailor's shop caught his eye, with dummies dressed in blue-and-gold, and white drill with black epaulets. And here, high in the air, was the sign of a tattoo artist. And here a junk-shop for sailors, piled high inside and out with a million useless, childish things—tin whistles, chess-boards, skins of alligators, a silk hat, a Masonic sword. The proprietor within sat in the middle with a smile on his little shrewd face, as if the wonderful assortment tickled his humor. Martin suddenly felt that all his passion had gone.

He turned into South Street and looked toward the Battery. As far as he could see the barn-like piers crowded low on his left and the houses huddled to his right like a crowd jammed against the ropes of an inclosure—junk-shop, tobacconist, barber, saloons, ship agencies and marine supplies. The tang of the docks crept into his nostrils like a spice, a faint mixture of salt water and tarred rope. A sailor passed him carrying a macaw in a huge cage, and the motley population of the port eddied about like a carnival—square-headed Scandinavians, erect, and every man a gentleman; stolid Germans; laughing negroes; here and there a Greek and a Turk; swarthy lascars in white duck; a pig-tailed Chinese; a Spaniard, rolling a cigarette as he passed, with long, tawny fingers; gnarled sailormen from Gloucester and Newport News. Along the street great

drays, drawn by Percherons, creaked by, whose drivers demanded way of one another with loud, savage curses. And about him, to his left, were the bows of ships, hawsered to the mooring-bits of the docks like horses in a manger: white, broad boats from the tropics, and sloppy Greek liners; a neat Danish boat, small as a torpedo-boat destroyer, which looked as if it could never cross the Atlantic; a great red Argentine boat, ungainly and out of place, like an overgrown child; here and there a coastwise vessel, high in the bow and low amidships; and farther on a great schooner, with a tarnished feminine figurehead in gilt, which had come from Marseilles.

He paused at a corner, looking at all this, drinking it in like a draft of pure air, when a babel of sounds from a saloon caught his ear—a crash and clatter, and the sound of disputation and the sound of laughter—and as he looked round for an instant the sight of a beggar, with an accordion, seated by the side door, held his eye. He could see by the man's red, salted face that he was an old seaman, with a pair of humorous blue eyes and a gap-toothed grin. A grimy mechanic's cap hung sidewise on his face and a tin cup by his side advertised his calling. He gave his shoulders a shake and drew the accordion out in a long moan. Martin looked on in hypnotized wonder, like a small child.

The accordion broke into a quivering, lilting prelude. The player put his head back and closed his eyes. His shoulders moved to the time. He broke suddenly into a low, throaty barytone:

“As I was a-passing down Paradise Street—

Wey! Hey! Blow the man down!—

As I was a-passing down Paradise Street—

Give me some time till I blow the man down!”

Martin started as though somebody had struck him a blow. He clenched his hands to keep still. The old halyards chantey swung on, with its rolling gait, like a man moving along a heaving deck, and its quick staccato rises.

Suddenly, as if a mighty formula of magic had been uttered, the scene faded about him and another scene came to him, taking form and action on the medium of his brain like a biograph picture on a screen. He felt suddenly that it was twenty years before and he was on a bridge for the first time as second mate in sail. Very distinctly he could hear the water at the bow and the welter of the tread behind; the tune of the chanteyman at the halyards; the squeal of the running shrouds. And below him he could see the crew bending to the halyards, and before him the blue line of sea, and behind him the gray line of the land.

“A strapping young woman I chanced for to meet—
Wey! Hey! Blow the man down!

A strapping young woman I chanced for to meet;
Give me some time till I blow the man down!”

All of New York—all of two and more restless years—swept out of his mind as a troubled dream passes when a sleeper wakes. Gone were the futile months of labor: the hurrying, merciless rush; the grinding strain of nerve and cell; the dull routine. Gone was the prison-like office; the puny efforts with pen and ledger; the scheming; the rebuffs; the touch of unworthy men and things, like pitch which defiles a man. His ears were filled with the faint mewing of sea-gulls, and his eyes saw blue combers breaking in whorling curves and creamy foam.

“This strapping young woman, she says unto me—
Wey! Hey! Blow the man down!

This strapping young woman, she says unto me:
Give me some time till I blow the man down!"

Before his mind Romance took shape and form and color. He saw himself bound for ancient ports and marvelous countries—America behind him, humming like a beehive, and before him the green translucence of Brazil, or the flashing beauty of islands in the Caribbean; Africa, lush and mysterious; the Levant, with its lyric splendor; or China, looming up, powerful, malignant, compelling, like a strange yellow giant; the calm of the sea in springtime, with an albatros fanning its great wings near the bow, porpoises playing in the distance, and a strange sail showing on the horizon like a fine etching; and after that the epic nights when they fought the sea like armed warriors, lurching, rolling, slipping, and winning.

Ah! There was life to that—not like being chained to a desk and doing everything by rote and rule, like a convict in a prison-yard! And the tang of danger in everything, which was the salt to food!

Clearly, insistently, he heard the sea calling him, like Gabriel calling from the clouds through a trumpet of brass—the creaking of blocks; the pulsing of engines; the lick of the wash at the bow and sides. He would go back to it again joyously.

And here an aching pain stabbed him. What of his wife? What would she say? And again the futility of arguing with her came to him with a great weariness. He could do nothing there, he thought; and he could not remain on. The place was stifling him. It was all right for her—she found life, or what she called life, here—but his place was the sea, the thing he had been born and brought up to, and whose spell had been in his blood for generations. There was

nothing to do but to cut off and leave her to follow on as she was doing. He would arrange everything for her and would see to it that she should never want for money. The profits of cruises should go to her; but for him the cruise and the work alone. That was enough. That was his destiny. He wouldn't argue or tell her at all, for the thought of a violent quarrel with her whom he had loved so long and so strongly was a prospect more repelling than death—than even the life he was leaving.

A great loneliness came over him. It was as if he were lowering her weighted coffin over the side of a ship; and the thought of what they had been to each other in the old days enveloped him with a great poignancy; and New York was the cause of it—its beginning and its end.

"Ah, God! The pity of it!" he murmured.

He straightened his back suddenly. If it was, it must be done. At any rate, after the first shock she would be happy. She would have her new friends, her new pursuits, and money to cultivate and follow them. But for him there was work to be done, no matter how his heart felt; a course to steer and a ship to bring from port to port. He threw his head back and a feeling of safety and comfort came to him, in spite of everything—the feeling that he had taken a right decision.

With a quick swing Martin turned into a garish tobacconist's store and crushed himself into a telephone booth. His clerk answered him at the other end of the wire.

"Get hold of Captain Enright as soon as you can," Martin ordered, "and tell him he's getting three months' leave. I'll take out the *City of Boston* this trip, myself."

The chanteyman was droning out his last verse

when Martin came out. He sang, with a world of experienced wisdom in his battered face:

“Oh, never take heed of what young women say—
Wey! Hey! Blow the man down!
Oh never take heed of what young women say!
Give me some time till I blow the man down!”

That was true, Martin said with sudden savageness. Once she had told him nothing could part them. Well, she had said she lived for nothing but him. And now any futile business, any hollow amusement, caught her as by a lariat. He brought himself up on the bit suddenly. That was enough!

The accordion gave its last asthmatic gasp. Martin reached to his vest pocket and brought out a yellow-backed bill. He dropped it into the man's cup. The chanteyman picked it up and looked hard at him.

“What's this for?” he asked.

“A sort of pilot's fee,” Martin replied with a little bitter smile.

The chanteyman gazed at him keenly. His eyes caught the decision in Martin's face, the tense set of shoulders and jaw.

“So you're down the tide and over the bar, Captain?” he said quietly. “A fine breeze and a good voyage to you! Sheet your mizzenroyals home, and . . .”

But Martin was striding up the street, his shoulders thrown back, and the thought of the sea before him like a vast burning cloud.

IX

They moved out into the river imperceptibly, with a mere ripple at the bow. The engine signals began their purring jangle—dead slow; slow; half-speed.

Forward, the first mate bellowed fierce, rapid orders to the men along the pier; aft, the second stood, watchful as a falcon. On the bridge, beside Martin, the third, a mere boy, looked on with the experienced air of a commodore. Behind, in the pilot-house, the quartermaster handled the wheel with deft, gentle hands. Snug to the cat-head the anchor dripped. The blue peter fluttered jauntily at the masthead. They warped about the pier into the East River and slid under the giant trellis of Brooklyn Bridge.

"We're clear!" Martin said to himself, and his heart stopped its rapid, trip-hammer thumping.

All the while, at the dock, he was afraid, as a criminal might be afraid, of something happening at the last moment to prevent him from taking his ship out. New York might put out some giant hand and pull him from the deck with the sinister enjoyment of a cat with a mouse. But he was off at last, with a cargo of machinery for the corn-fields of Argentina, and he would not see land again until they raised Bahia—thirteen long days.

It might have been yesterday that he was standing on his bridge in his blue and brass, and his jaunty seaman's cap set jauntily on the flaxen hair. Every action, every thought, came back to him so clearly that it seemed impossible to believe that it was more than two years since he had stood there and threaded his way through the harbor's traffic. He would have sung aloud for sheer happiness if it had not been for the soreness of his heart within, the feeling that he had left some integral part of him back in the city whose buildings were slipping past like barges.

They had passed the Battery now and the roads lay before them, straight and narrow to the sea. Ten-thirty, his watch said. In an hour and a half she would know that he had left her. And it gave him a

fierce jarring ache to think of the distraught pain with which she would receive the news.

With clear distinctness he remembered the evening, three days before, when he had gone home, his intention fixed. There had been guests at dinner—a man and his wife and a little Belgian girl. After dinner they were all to have gone to the opera, but earlier in the day Martin had telephoned that after dinner he had some work to do, and that they should go without him. He had said very little during the meal. His heart, it had seemed, was breathless. As they rose, his wife looked at him hard—very hard.

“I don’t think I’ll go out to-night,” she said.

“Of course you’ll go,” he urged. He turned to her friends. “You’ve got to take her along,” he said, smiling. “I’m going to turn the house into an office. Run along with you.”

But she stood at the door for an instant, with her eyes trained on him like guns, silent, with brows furrowed. And for the first time in his life he had shifted under her gaze.

And for the last two days she had done that often, looking at him intently in queer moments. And several times she had turned to him and called his name:

“Ned!” she had uttered in a serious tone.

“What is it, Nellie?” he had answered.

“Oh, nothing!”

She put it off after a moment’s silence, and had given, when he pressed it, some ridiculous explanation.

Governors Island slipped by, a long barren spit of gravel and mud, with its neat houses at the head of it, and the squat round brown arsenal, like a Chinaman’s cap. They made their way through the maze of steamers lying at anchor in the bay—Italian, Danish, Russian, Irish, Australian. A Staten Island

ferry-boat passed them, with a string band playing.

To leeward the coast line of New Jersey showed up in a pale-green line. He thought, as he watched it, of the hardest thing of all—of his farewell to her that morning. He had said he must go downtown early—at eight. Breakfast over, he started.

“Good-by, Nellie!” he said, and kissed her cheerily.

And he hung on and did not go.

“Hurry up!” she had urged. “You must get out.”

“Listen!” he said again. “Nellie, good-by!”

“Oh, Ned!” she had laughed. “I’ve got a frightful lot to do this morning. Hurry along; there’s a good man.”

And she had pushed him smilingly through the doorway and shut the door on him. And he had gone off disconsolate. That was his good-by. And she was too busy—that morning of mornings!

They slowed down at the cable crossing in the Narrows and swung past the green, cunningly concealed ports. To starboard Coney Island showed in a faint white smudge, and Sandy Hook curled round before them like the blade of a scythe.

Well, he had done his best, he told himself. She wouldn’t want for money or comfort. He had settled up all his affairs and had put all, except a working balance for the ship, in the bank to her credit. All that was left of his venture for fortune was an old clerk in an old office building—a one-man, one-ship line again! And at twelve to-day the clerk would send her the note he had prepared.

“I couldn’t stand New York,” he had written, “and you wouldn’t leave it; so I am going back to sea. I am sorry, Nellie . . .”

So she would want a letter written, straight to the

point; no sentiment! And he told the clerk to keep in touch with her, surreptitiously, and be ready to step in if she were in any trouble. She would be getting the letter now.

He turned to the third officer mechanically.

"Sou'west by west!" he ordered.

And he listened while it was being passed to the quartermaster, and repeated back. He pulled back the telegraph to full speed ahead!

The strong salt wind poured against him as out of a machine, and as he filled his lungs with it he wondered how he could ever have lived in the stifling city air! It seemed impossible that he, a ship's master, could ever have consented to live cooped up like an animal in a mephitic cage. He remembered the old Board of Trade official with whom he had gone through the formalities incident to returning to his old work, a small, gnarled man, with spectacles, sixty years old.

"So you're going back to the sea?" he smiled.

"I am," Martin nodded.

"You ought never to have left it," was the comment of the official.

And it was so true that he couldn't find it in him to resent the uncalled-for criticism. No; he ought never to have left it!

There had, also, for the last days, been working in his superstitious sailor's mind the vague idea that it was not by chance he was back here. The loss of those ships! Might not the sea—that powerful unseen personality—have done this for his good? He might never have gone back had it not been for that. It had been no stray caprice. But a disciplinary measure to save him from dying of inanition and comfort. The sea! That was a thing one never understood.

"I don't know," he muttered. "I don't know."

Eight bells struck—noon. She was reading his letter now. The melancholy eternal bell of Scotland Light-ship began tolling in the distance, and he thought, as the first swing of the Atlantic lifted them, of the way her heart was being pierced. He let his head fall on his chest and his hands clenched the rail viciously. She would be standing in her drawing-room, reading the note with terrible dry eyes, her hand pressed against her bosom, her face white and her lips gray, and a little moan coming out of them like a trickle of blood.

The first officer swung up the steps briskly. He turned to Martin.

"I've got a stowaway," he reported.

"A stowaway!" Martin repeated dully.

"A stowaway!" he said again. Suddenly the old rage of captains against the parasites of ships flared up like a fire. "Bring him up!" he roared. "Bring him up here immediately!"

Quietly and meekly, and with a smile on her face, his wife climbed to the bridge. Her eyes were dancing with amused devilment.

"It's hardly fair of the mate to call me a stow-away, Ned," she smiled, "considering he stowed me away himself."

Martin was standing petrified, as it were; breathless; something pounding an unintelligible message in his head, like a wireless hindered by static. His heart thumped with great resounding strokes.

"I'm going to Bahia with you," she went on calmly; "then I'm taking a boat to Buenos Aires, I'll be there waiting on the dock when you come in. I haven't had much time to discuss plans since Tuesday. I've been busy selling furniture, jewels, dresses—and a motor-car."

He continued to look at her in dumb amazement. He examined her as if he were uncertain she was there. His eye took in slowly her trim rough tweed, her mellow tan shoes, the little hat with its rakish tilt—just as she used to be.

Martin tried hard to calm the beating of his heart, which seemed about to burst into a great pæan of joy. She leaned across the rail and the breeze rippled the tendrils of hair about her ears.

“It’s good to feel the sea again!” She threw her head back joyously.

“But you said,” Martin managed to get out slowly, “but you said you were too happy to come away!”

She turned round and looked at him with that merry, elusive nymph’s look in her eyes, which had always seemed to him like the point of a swordsman’s rapier, a rapid, flashing thing, past which he could not get and which had always made her, for him, the most interesting problem in the world.

She pursed her lips and began whistling. And again he heard the old halyards chant with its ripple and roll. Softly she began to sing it:

“Blow the man down!
Oh never give heed to what young women say!
Give me some time till I—”

He made a quick dive for her; but smartly she eluded him, sprang to the deck, and disappeared amidships.

And as he stood there, waiting to pass Scotland Light-ship—when he could leave his bridge and go and find her—an ineffable feeling of joy and freedom encircled him. And he heard, high above the lapping of waves and the sonorous tone of the light-

ship's bell, the eternal mystic chantey a man hears only once or twice in a lifetime—the mighty harmony that plays between the fixed and wandering stars.

IX

AN INFRINGEMENT OF THE DECALOGUE

WHEN Bertrand Lacy, gambler, wastrel, and blackguard generally, deserted his wife Nan, aged eighteen, and his son Norman, aged three weeks, in New York, there was no limit to the pity people extended to her.

"And he left her without a cent in the world!" they whispered in the boarding-house. "He even pawned her jewelry!"

"Of course she will go back to her people in Ireland," the wiseacres decided for her. "She has them to fall back on."

But here the wise erred. She had not them to fall back on. When Bertrand Lacy had come to Galway, hardly over a year before, and when he and Nan Burke-Keogh met, liked each other, fell in love with each other, and courted, they had done everything surreptitiously. From New York had Lacy come, according to him, in a haze of glory. His business in New York was vague and his pedigree vaguer. The man knew horses. He knew the points of flat and steeplechase racing, of hunting, of harriers. These things he might have picked up about race-courses and about dog-shows, to be sure, but the impression he gave was that he had been accustomed to them as a sportsman, not as a hanger-on.

At Baldoyle he had met some of the newer generation of gentility, honest tradesfolk who should have

been harvesting the fruits of commerce in place of squandering it on a sport they could neither afford nor understand. His knowledge of horses stood him in good stead. It provided him with a comfortable sum for summer expenses, some introductions, and an invitation to spend a month in Galway.

"We'll show you sport the like of which you never saw in America, when we get you after the harriers," his host, a wealthy brewer, told him. And so Lacy went.

In Dublin it would have been impossible for him to meet, without a proper investigation of his antecedents, Nan, daughter of Sir Michael Burke-Keogh, that fierce old fox-hunter with the most terrible temper in Ireland. But Galway is a sleepy city, basking like a kitten in the sun, with boats drowsing along the stone quays, and strange, silent country people coming in from the purple Connaught hills. Life is empty there, and social barriers are not strictly kept. At the hunt Lacy met her, and later at the houses around, where he had secured a casual entry. Her father he never met, nor wished to meet. The old man's bushy eyebrows and granite eyes beneath, as he saw them in the distance, warned him that here was an examiner who could probe like a lancet.

The very surreptitiousness of it all captured her, as well as Lacy's appearance and his potent way with women. Not a tall man, by any means, but stocky and well built; a clear face, with waving ruddy hair and chestnut eyes; a cleft chin and a voice that was soothing like music. And there was an eternal quizzing smile on his face that hinted at superior knowledge of the world, of women, of life.

I think he must have been very much in love with her, or taken with her, as the case might be better put. She was a very small and lithe woman, with

quick, incisive gestures. Her hair was misty black, and her eyes were nearly too large for her face, and very gray. Her nose and nostrils had the clean cut of race. Her mouth might have been cut by a sculptor's scalpel, so well shaped and firm it seemed; and she was only seventeen. She was a very beautiful woman then, was Nan Burke-Keogh of Galway, and she is now, twenty-three years later, and she will be until the day she dies.

They met. They rode and boated together. They danced together at the hunt balls. He swept her off her feet by the impetuosity of his love-making.

"I love you, Nan, little Nan," he told her. They were on the terrace of the club, and from where they stood they could see the glistening Atlantic waves shimmering under the harvest moon. The dancers within were waltzing rhythmically, a delicate kaleidoscope of frocks and uniforms and red hunting-coats. The band breathed out a dreamy waltz of Strauss, and mingling with the rippling music came the languorous murmur of the waves.

"Little Nan, will you come away with me to America? Will you marry me, and fly over? Will you, little Nan?"

"What will Father say?" She was fearful.

"Listen, little Nan," he pressed eagerly. "We won't tell him until everything is over. Let's not have a wedding with a crowd at church. Let's go off. I want to sweep you away. I want to carry you off in my arms, right here, right now."

"But Father . . ." She hesitated.

"Your father will come around!" he told her. "Don't fear. Come, little Nan, little Nan!"

She thought for an instant, and by some measure of intuition she knew that her father would never give his consent to her marriage with this man; and

that if she loved him and wanted him she must listen to his wooing now.

"My father will never come around," she said simply. She swept about to him, and her hands went out. "But I will come with you and follow you to the end of the world. And you will be good to me and take care of me, won't you, Bertrand? won't you?"

"I will take care of you and cherish you until the end of the world!"

"Then I will come," she decided.

That very night she came, and on the morrow they were married in Dublin, and on the next day were flying toward America. There was not much reason to fly, however, for Sir Michael Burke-Keogh had no intention of following them. He contented himself with a terrible outburst of temper, in which he cursed her solemnly by bell, book, and candle; disinherited her; erased her name from the family records. Then his mouth closed forever into a grim, thin line. When a priest came to inform him of the marriage, he turned on the father with a roar as of a maddened bull.

"My daughter married!" he shouted. "My daughter! If you mean the slut who ran away with somebody's cast-off groom, let me tell you, sir, that she is no daughter of mine. No woman of our house has ever done a thing like that before; and when she does, she is dead!"

Little by little she came to understand the manner of man she had married, and, loyal heart that she was, might have condoned his way of livelihood had he kept up his love for her. Imperceptibly it waned until it was no longer there. They traveled about the race-tracks of the South and West for nearly a year. Luck deserted him, and he grew irritable. They were in New York when their son was

about to be born, and at their lowest ebb for money.

"Cable to your father, Nan," was his eternal plea. "If he knows, he'll be glad to help you out."

He reasoned, he cajoled, he threatened, and about this time her lips began to curl into a faint sneer as she heard him whine. She could have borne much in him—his dissoluteness, his dishonesty even—but one thing she could not bear, and that was the appeal, the whine, the cowardice of him.

Their son was born, and as he lay in her arms a few days after, the father made an attempt to bluster.

"Now, look here, Nan!" he told her. "You've got to be sensible. You'll send that cable. Tell him he has a grandson. That will soften him."

She said nothing. She looked at him searchingly, probingly, with her great blue-lined eyes standing out in her wan white face like dead stars. At last he saw the futility of it. He paced about the room.

"Curse you!" he raved. "If it hadn't been for you, I'd have never been in this mess. If I hadn't married you, I'd have been having a good time now, instead of being broke in this dump." He paced about more and suddenly he quailed before the glance in the haggard, shadowy eyes. "What are you looking at me like that for?" he ended weakly. "Take your eyes off me!"

A fortnight after that he left her. He had gone out in the morning, and returned about eleven—two hours later. He walked into the dingy room, carelessly humming a tune, but there was something tense and nervous about him. He glanced at her, and he glanced at the child sleeping on the bed.

"I think I'll drop around to the corner for a couple of minutes before lunch," he hazarded. He opened the bureau drawer and extracted the last few

dollars from it. "Ahum! Yes! I think I'll drop around." And he sauntered out.

And that was the last Nan saw of Bertrand Lacy, living or dead.

Her heart was broken. It had been broken long before this, although she had said nothing. But if her heart was broken, her spirit wasn't. It was as vital in her at that moment as it had been in any of the Burke-Keoghs who had sailed out of Galway into Spain, resilient as whalebone, strong as steel.

She sat and she thought for a while in that grim and sordid room, with the child sleeping peacefully on the bed; and her brain operated as clearly then as it has ever operated since, more clearly than it had ever done before. Here she was, an abandoned wife, with a child not a month old, with not a cent of money, and with little that was pawnable. What was she to do? She couldn't go back to her father: he would have her whipped from the gates. And what was more, she wouldn't if she could, for she had made her own bed and she would lie on it! Below, the people of the house might extend her charity, but she suspected shrewdly how impatient and overbearing charity can be. Besides, she would have none of it were it the kindest thing in the world.

She put her coat on with quick decision. She put her hat on. She requested a fellow-lodger—a hard-faced little circus woman whose heart belied the aggressive glint in her eyes—to mind the baby until she returned.

"I'll be a half-hour at most," she said, and she went down the dingy brownstone steps with her head high, as a queen might descend the steps of a throne.

There was a great department-store about the

corner, and she swept into it. Because she was a lady, and because she had that firm, commanding way of the Burke-Keoghs, when she asked to see the manager she was led to him. A kindly, shrewd-eyed, hook-nosed, fleshy man, he took in every detail about her, from the well-worn but well-brushed suit to the proud tilt of her head and the firm command in her eyes. He noticed too, in an impersonal way, how beautiful she was, even with her features as wan and haggard as they now were.

"What can I do for you, madam?" he asked courteously.

"You can give me something to do," she told him. "I want work."

"Yes," he said, without apparent surprise. "Is there any particular thing you could do?"

"I know a great deal about lace," she answered. "I was once told I knew more about it than any person in Europe."

Which was true, large as it sounds. As far back as Nan Burke-Keogh's mind could go, she could remember her mother's pride in it, and how the dear lady had tried to instil a love into her for the filmy, web-like fabrics. At the convent in Malines, the sisters had encouraged her in the study of it. When other children were deep in the delights of innocuous love-stories, she was following with an appreciative eye the stars and circles, the whorls, the lunes, the bars, the arabesques of laces done by the delicate fingers of noblewomen now dead, and the fresh products of patient peasants. Those were Nan's two accomplishments—her knowledge of laces and her horsemanship.

"Would you mind telling me," she was asked, "why you want to work?"

"A very private matter," she answered proudly, "and because I have to."

He sent for a silent, dapper man, who talked to her of work, questioning her minutely, without seeming to do so, about what she knew. The fleshy manager rose.

"I think we might arrange something," he decided.

This is not the chronicle of Nan Lacy's success in the business world. I know nothing about business and I care less. I am not interested in the various steps by which she rose from a twenty-dollar-a-week position to a salary of fifteen thousand a year. It suffices me that she did so. She rose to danger like a thing of race, and smashed all obstacles aside, like a blooded hunter at the touch of the spur.

And this was not the only obstacle in her way. There was the question of Norman Lacy, aged one month. What was to become of him, now that she was earning her own living? She could not keep him by her. In that one electric day of clear thought she accomplished everything. She found a pair of ladies in Sheepshead Bay who were delighted to take care of him, for a nominal board bill, so empty their lives were. For two years she lived out there with him, looking after him at night, and leaving him in the morning, to come in to her business. At the age of two he began to show signs of wilfulness that filled the old ladies' hearts with dread, much as they loved him.

"God grant he won't be a heart-sore to her when he grows up!" they prayed fervently.

There came the time later when her rise had been such as to warrant the leasing of an apartment and the hire of cook and nurse. At five the qualities the child had shown at two had strengthened and diversified. He seemed full of ebullient, uncontrollable

spirits that nearly always resulted in mischief. He was ready with fists and feet. He had a mania for breaking things.

"It's little comfort he'll be to his mother," the cook thought. She had come to know by some means or other the tragic story of the marriage. "She'll have as much trouble with him as she had with her husband."

She was twenty-five now, and yet, except for the quietness of her eyes that should have been sparkling with laughter, she seemed little older than the day she left Galway. The color had never gone from her cheeks, and she took an honest, womanly pride in her beauty, though the thought of another husband had never entered her mind; and, moreover, there was always the possibility of the first turning up again, and claiming her. If he did—her eyes glinted with sudden savageness—she would thrash him with her riding-crop until he screamed for mercy, and she would cast him out into the street, like the most unfaithful of mongrel dogs!

So, unmindful of any man save the first, for whom she had nothing but the utmost loathing, she went her way, sufficient unto herself. She took care of her beauty, and took care of her health. She could ride now that the yoke of want had been raised from her neck, and Saturday afternoon and Sunday would see her whirling through Westchester country on a great hunter, like an Amazon going into battle. She walked through the streets with her head high, her shoulders straight, her stride swinging and rhythmic. And there was no man she knew who did not admire her, and there were many who loved her, but there were none who dared speak to her of it, because of that aloof and magnificently chaste expression of her eyes.

"My Lord!" Bahr, the advertising manager used to mutter to himself. "To think that that woman was married, and had a child by a scoundrel! She looks like one of Diana's attendants; like Diana herself, begad!"

She understood the boy, and she felt, intuitively, that the boy understood her. There were very few demonstrations of affection between them, but there was a bond, a sort of friendliness, a manner of comradeship. Those about her did not understand this. At eight he was sent to a military school in the South. He shook hands with her in a manly way, and blushed when she stooped to kiss him. Then he was off.

"And not a tear in his eye!" a woman friend thought to herself. "The hard-hearted little beast! She need never depend on him when she grows old."

And so years slipped onward. For her they went by like one mellow day after another, sunset verging into sunrise, and the sands of the hour-glass rippling silverly until the sun dropped again. More intent still she became on her work, until there was nothing of space left in her time which was not taken up by business, and her riding and swimming, and the reading of letters from and reports of her boy at school.

From an educational point of view these reports were not very encouraging. "He is the sturdiest lad in the school," so they went, "honest and honorable, but nearly beyond control. His knowledge of books is disgraceful. The only interest he has is athletics. A great pity!" But she only smiled.

He would come home at the end of the year laden with athletic trophies, with cups and medals. These he distributed about the apartment. He never formally gave them to her or mentioned them, but she knew they were for her.

At eighteen she broached to him the subject of college. He shook his head.

"I'm not keen on it," he said casually. "I've been casting about for something to do. A man I know has a place down in Ecuador—a sort of mine or something. Thought I'd like to have a go at that."

She looked at him a little wistfully, but she smiled. So he was a man now, eager for adventure and life! How like his father he looked in feature, she thought. The same rippling chestnut hair; the light-brown eyes; the straight nose; the cleft chin. There the resemblance ceased. Where his father had been short and stocky, with small, delicate hands, the son was well over six feet, with hands that seemed gigantic, broadened and hardened by glove contests, by hockey stick and polo mallet. Other people were shocked by his prowess in the amateur ring: it was said he could knock an opponent out with the ease of a professional heavy-weight, but somehow she was glad. There were other things of his father's he did not inherit. He had not his father's uneasy eyes; he had not his father's flow of speech and musical voice. His speech was casual; his voice rough.

"If you think that's the best thing," she told him, "then go."

He did think so, and he went. But the fortune at the end of the rainbow did not reveal itself to him. For four years he tramped up and down the world, returning home at intervals of six months—except for fifteen months in Africa—and bringing with him sufficient money to tide him over a month at home and to pay his fare overseas again. He had never any luck in his ventures. Once it was the mine in Ecuador, and once a banana plantation partnership in Colombia, and once a game-capturing expedition in the Congo, but none of them came to anything. Yet he

never complained. He would come back with weird presents for his mother: spears and arrows from the Congo; a compressed human head from the waters of the Maranon; fifty aigret feathers from Colombia. He was arrested for attempting to smuggle in these last, and it took the combined influence of fifty million dollars' worth of money to have him released on the ground that he was a harmless lunatic. Once he drove home in a taxi with a bawling macaw under one arm, while a small cheetah barked and snarled at the end of a leash. There were tears in his mother's eyes when it was explained to him that an apartment was no place for them and that they would have to be sent to the Zoölogical Gardens. She knew the trouble he had had in bringing them to her, and the happiness he experienced in making her presents.

And every time he returned she watched him with continuously growing pride. He was only twenty-two now, but he had broadened and filled, and he might have been thirty, so self-reliant he seemed, and so firm and challenging was his eye. His face was tanned to the color of leather, and the huge hands had become clubs of brown sinew and muscle. She would have been furious had she heard the strictures of the friends to whom she introduced him so proudly.

"It's a shame," they said, "the way she works year in and out, while he rambles around the world like a rolling-stone. Why doesn't he make a home for her, and take her away from that wretched business?"

When they stood side by side they seemed like sister and brother. It would have been impossible for any one not aware of the facts to suppose them mother and son. She was forty now, and she looked

not a day over thirty years old. Her black massy hair shone as brightly as ever, and she was as lissom as she had ever been. The only difference was a certain maturity to her frame, and that look of patience and understanding in her great gray eyes. A miracle it was how little she had changed since the time she had fled to America with Bertrand Lacy.

"I can't understand how that woman does it!" Bahr, the advertising man, would complain. "I can't remember her different since the day she came to us. And here I am, old and bald and gray since."

Even the marriage with Lacy, the terrible year spent with him, had faded from her memory until it had taken on the proportions of some ancient tragic romance she had read in a book. At first the thought of it had cut her to the heart, like a whip laid on a raw wound; then it had become a thing to wince at; then a painful memory that could be put aside, as a thing may be pushed out of the way into a drawer; then a dim, remote thing like an unhappy fairy-tale remembered from childhood.

She had been getting a little lonely of late, and after she passed her fortieth birthday, a week before, she had begun wondering what life would be like ten, or even twenty years from now. She would cry a little in the evenings, for she knew she could not work forever, and she knew too that she could not expect her harum-scarum son to settle down, and marry, and have children she could unload her heart upon in her old age. He was not that kind, she knew. As soon think of changing a gerfalcon into a twittering pigeon, or a leopard into a house cat. She did not blame him. Had she been a man she would have had exactly the same vision of life as he—a restless, roving one. There was no place for her to return to in Ireland; the entail of the estate was broken and

the property had descended to a nephew. She had friends in New York, to be sure, but to impose on a friendship the burden of a restless, homeless woman of middle age was something she, with her sportsmanlike blood, could not do. For the first time in her life her seemingly indomitable courage failed her. It was then she met John Hunter—Colonel John Hunter—and she fell in love with him, and he with her.

It came on her in that sudden explosion with which all great things occur. It came like a soothing smother of rain on the arid land of her life—for, courageous as she had been, her life was arid, in spite of work, in spite of the sorry makeshifts of amusement and exercise. She had surmounted a great mountain, only to find that at its summit there was no welcoming asylum for her fall of life, but an icy and lonely peak where cold winds blew eternally.

She was a big woman now, a power in business circles, but she had never forgotten the hobbies of her girlhood. She could still lift a hunter over a six-foot-six-inch gate, and she still thrilled to the intricacies of fine lace. An exhibition of Philippine industries was held somewhere on Forty-second Street and she went there to see the lace that had been brought over. She asked some technical questions of the little *mestiza* attendant. The girl, at a loss, appealed to a great bent pillar of a man, who was selecting carefully some cigars.

"My name is Hunter, John Hunter," he explained embarrassedly. "If there's any way I can help?"

And in this wise she met Colonel John Hunter—General now, of the Philippine Scouts. A gigantic frame of man, lean nearly to the point of emaciation; a great, sweeping line of jaw, with an embarrassedly smiling mouth; grizzled at the temples;

great-nosed; with black eyes that seemed to pierce and to smile good-naturedly at the same time.

He has a long and honorable record, has John Hunter—in Cuba, in Porto Rico, and in the Philippines. He is very deadly in warfare and very kindly in peace, but the most marked characteristic about him was his shyness where women were concerned. He could never find anything to say to them, and he fidgeted so much in their company that they were as glad to be rid of him as he to get away. He was forty-five now, and unmarried, though it was not for lack of women who would have been glad to be wife to him had he been interested in them or had they been able to interest him.

“He’s the decentest soul alive,” they would sum him up wistfully; “but he’s absolutely impossible,” they were forced to concede.

There is a chemical affinity, which we can prove meticulously by the action of acids on salts, of gases on molten metal; by quantitative and qualitative analyses that leave no whit of doubt. There is a spiritual affinity, too, which we cannot prove, but which is evidenced by such occurrences as John Hunter, shyest of men, babbling over tea at the Ritz to Nan Lacy, most guarded of women, whom he had met a bare half-hour before—and she as conversationally enthusiastic as he. It was evidenced by her parting from him blushing, having made an appointment to ride with him in the park next morning; and by the cock of his head and the swing of his stride as he walked up the avenue, and by the lightest expression of his heart he had experienced since he had received his first command. They rode together next morning and had lunch. They met the next day. A week whirled by in a vortex, and the end naturally came.

It came in at the most unromantic of places, at the most unromantic of times. It came while they were sitting on a bench in Central Park on a Saturday afternoon. Beside them horses clumped painfully along the bridle-paths, their mouths sawed by clumsy riders. Near by, motors snarled past with a raucous barking of horns. A few urchins chased one another loudly about. Hunter moved his head away.

"There's something I wanted to say," he announced haltingly. He stopped for a few instants. "There's something I wanted to say, and I don't know how to put it. I had it all worked out a while ago."

He stopped again, and said nothing. He glared at the ground fixedly.

"You see," he went on lamely, "I've never been married."

He felt a wild panic then, as if he wanted to rise up and flee away. He summoned up enough courage to look at her face, to see if she were shocked, insulted, hurt. She was smiling at him tenderly, and her eyes were full of tears.

There was no wild embrace in the middle of the public park. There was no torrent of love-making. He simply put his hand and took hers, and patted it gently. Thus they were affianced.

She was very much in love. It tingled in every nerve of her body and filled every crevice of her brain, and set her spirit singing tunefully. There is the love of the early youth, that is like young spring, a thing of perfume and flowers, of great bursts of sunshine and of sudden squalls of rain, a turbulent uncertain thing. There is the love of maturer years, torrid and outrageous, heavy with thunder-clouds like a July storm, and with lightning that stabs like spears. And there is the one that Nan Lacy was ex-

periencing now: the mellowness of complete maturity, like a day of late summer, golden and mellow, full of life and serenity, flushing into delicate mauve tones. A rare and gracious thing it is, and a wonderful light shines from the faces of those who have it, like the Shekinah of the Tabernacle, the glory of the Lord.

She was happy now, utterly happy. No longer would she look in terror toward the barren years. There was a goodly stretch of life and health before them both, and then they would drift imperceptibly into the quietness of age, as on the breast of a singing river. It seemed impossible too, grotesquely impossible, that, after all these years of pounding on a merciless sea, she should make port at last, a port of fairy dreams, a land of rest and comfort and love and quietness, a thing she had been longing for now more than twenty years, and which had been withheld from her until she could savor it fully.

There were two fears before her: one was the husband unheard from for twenty-two years. She was certain he was dead, but it seemed wrong to contract a marriage with another man while there was this uncertainty.

"I know he's dead!" she told Hunter, "but somehow I . . ."

"I understand," the soldier told her. "You don't feel a widow. At any rate, he's legally dead, and you're free. We can get out the legal papers."

So that was settled. But something that disturbed her more was the attitude her son might adopt. She felt toward him as she might have felt toward a parent whose consent she was uncertain of—a great shyness, a modesty, a sort of unreasonable fear. Very timidly in a dimmed light, she told him about it. He listened to her, and when he raised his face,

he saw her features glowing, and the minute, gem-like dimness in her eyes. He went over and, putting his arm about her, kissed her silently, unadroitly. Then he straightened up, and his voice was gruff, as though he were ashamed of giving way.

"I think I'll take a little stroll," he said.

She smiled to herself, for she knew well where he was going on his stroll. He was going out to call on Colonel Hunter, and to size him up, as the lad's saying was. It warmed her heart to feel that she had him looking after her, even in that undemonstrative, casual way of his. She went singing about the apartment until he returned, stopping at times to try to guess what he would say when he returned. Two or three words. That would be all. Something like, "It's all right!" or "Go ahead!"

When he came in, his face was puzzled, and a certain line of disgust ran across his features. She started up in fear.

"What is it, Norman!" she cried. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing," he said, "I was thinking of the Gold Coast. A Galla there wanted to sell me a diamond stolen from the Kimberley mines. Big as the Kohinoor! Offered him six hundred bones for it, but he wanted a thousand and I hadn't it. And if I had just belted him one on the jaw I could have got it for nothing. I wish to Heaven I had! It would have made a corking wedding-present for you!"

He looked across the dingy table in the back room of the saloon at the gray-haired, furtive man in front of him. Detail by detail he went over the man's appearance—the livid skin and manner of speaking with half-closed lips, which denoted the man had known jails; the furtive, cowardly, and otherwise look

in the eyes, that told of evil learned and done; the shabby but well-brushed clothes, the last stand of the old dandy.

"So you're my dad!" he said acidly.

"Yes, I'm your dad," the old man agreed nervously.

"So you thought you'd look us up, Dad," the son went on. "Why didn't you do it before?"

"I thought you were all dead," Bertrand Lacy explained nervously. "It was only when I saw that article about your mother in the paper—how successful she had been, and how she was going to marry this colonel—that I knew she was alive. I found out where she was, from the people in New York, and I came on."

They had come down for a few weeks to a little New England watering-place, Nan Lacy and John Hunter, and Norman came also with them, by way of a chaperon. They had not been married yet, and they were not to be for a month. This was not to be a hole-in-the-corner affair like her first venture, Hunter had decided in his generous way. She was to have everything she missed then, and more—a reverend cleric and a crowded church, an organ reverberating through the chancel, ushers in dress-uniform. She blushed a little at this, and was embarrassed by it, but the maiden that was in the heart of her looked forward to it joyously.

And so her son, who was more at home in any other line of endeavor, found himself in the profession of chaperon. To his credit or discredit, as the case may be, he was lax in the performance of his duties, leaving his mother and the colonel severely alone while they went riding or walking. It was due to this that he had been in the hotel when the furtive man was making inquiries about Mrs. Lacy. Norman

discovered him trying to extract some information from the porter of the hotel. Some intuitive sense of danger warned him.

"Mrs. Lacy is out," he went forward and told him, "but I am Norman Lacy, her son, and if there is anything I can do for you . . ."

He had steered the furtive man into a quiet saloon, and had listened, expressionless, to the information that his companion was his father.

"And now that you are back," the son went on warily, "this wedding is off?"

"I don't know," the father sparred. He looked sideways at the boy. "It seems a pity!"

"Come through!" The son had dropped his caustic manner and his voice grated with menace. "That's enough. What do you want?"

"I've got my rights," the father laughed.

"You've got no rights," the son retorted hotly. "You're legally dead."

The elder Lacy smiled. Of all the subtle weapons that Satan had placed in his hand the subtlest was his understanding of women. He might be legally dead. He might be a scoundrel and a blackguard. But he knew that Nan Lacy would marry no man if she were confronted with her first husband. He knew that to marry Hunter, and Lacy about, would appear to her a monstrous immodesty, a thing that she would shrink from as the blackest of mortal sins. Even her own high sense of chastity he would turn against her as a weapon. He knew women well. And from that mocking smile the son glimpsed something of the danger in which his mother's happiness stood.

"Well?" he snapped. "What is it? What do you want? Money?"

The older man was on sure ground now. His

nervousness had worn off. The only fear he had had was of the preliminary introduction, of his being laughed at as an impostor, of not being recognized.

"Yes, you pup!" he answered boldly. "That's what I want, and that's what I'm going to get, and get quick. And I want a lot of it. I want five thousand."

"I haven't got it," the son answered. "It's out of the question."

"If you haven't got it, your mother has, and you can get it from her, or you and her new friend can fix it up between you. I don't care what you do. But I'm going to get it."

The son rose in a passion of fury, but his four years in the jungle had taught him something. It had taught him the value of cunning as well as the value of strength. To strike the man now would be as dangerous as to strike a fanged snake. He was beaten from the outset. That was definite.

"I'll give you until to-morrow at this hour," the father dictated, "and if it isn't fixed—then blooey! Understand? Now go home and have a family party. Regards from Pop!"

The son rose and went off. At the door he turned.

"Until to-morrow!" he said quietly. "And if, in the meantime, you dare speak to my mother, or to Colonel Hunter, then God help you! That's all!"

It occurred to him more than once that day, with a sense of ridiculousness, that in all his life he had never thought as much as in those ten hours. What could he do? he asked himself in panic. Should he go to the colonel and tell him everything? The man would understand. That was a last resort. He had friends in New York, rich men—men he had met abroad—who might help. Might, he repeated to himself. What could he do? He would give his right

hand, his right eye, his life even, to preserve that look of happiness on his mother's face.

He had been lax in his duties as chaperon until now, but to-day he never let his charges out of his sight for an instant. He had a vague dread that his mother might meet the man in the street, or that the father himself, in his impatience to make a killing, might disclose himself to Hunter. From noon until ten at night he thrust himself upon the lovers. Even when, at that hour, they decided to stroll down the pier, he insisted upon walking along with them.

They walked down the street and on to the deserted quay. There was the cold quality of a May night in the air, and no moon. Outside the circles of light cast by the dim street lamps was a purple darkness like velvet, like some sort of opaque liquid through which one walked. They passed a garish picture-house, with its posters of black and red. They skirted a ship-building yard, the white population of whose slips were invisible in the dark. Their feet struck hollowly on the wooden planks of the pier, and they passed along slowly through the black air toward the violet nimbus of the great incandescent light in the middle of the pier.

To the right of them the harbor lay, the tiny lights of the opposite shore mirrored faintly on its surface. To the left of them the wooded country rose, and there was a faint *shush* to the boughs of the trees as a quiet and unseen wind moved them. The tide was emptying out of the harbor into the ocean with the strength and rapidity of water flowing through a funnel. It swished past the supports of the pier and gurgled faintly in minute whirlpools.

The colonel and Nan Lacy stopped under the bluish shower of incandescent light and gazed silently across the dark space. The son looked va-

cantly over the waters in accord with them. He was standing lazily, his hands in his pockets, when he stiffened into attention suddenly, like a bird-dog pointing. His ear had caught the shuffle of careful footsteps, and as he threw his head around to catch a glimpse of the passer-by, he saw a furtive, rapid figure slip into the shadows past them.

"Hum!" he said to himself. He had recognized his father. So the man was stalking them. He was afraid, perhaps, that the son would have bundled the party off to some other place and have the wedding celebrated before he could act. He was taking no chances on that. He was as much on guard as his son was.

The boy turned to his mother.

"I think I'll stroll to the end of the dock," he said.

"Be careful," she warned him, "be careful, Norman. It is pitch-dark."

"Oh, I'll be all right," he laughed. He made his way down the pier sure-footedly through the darkness until he came to the crouching figure in the shadows.

"I want to have that thing out," he whispered. "Come along with me."

He walked along until they came to the end of the pier, picking out his steps with the certainty of a cat in the dark. His father followed him haltingly. He stopped at the edge and turned on the man.

"So you've been following them about all day!" he sneered. "Probably telling your business to everybody too!"

"No such fool," his father laughed. "Nobody knows my business and nobody knows I'm following you around. Well, did you get that money?"

"I didn't get that money," the boy told him; "and,

what's more, I'm not going to get it. Now, listen to me. Your game's up. There's nothing you can get out of us. You're lucky you're not in jail for blackmail. One word to you: you'd better clear."

There was an instant's silence. The faint, invisible wind continued to rustle tree branches in a harmonious, swinging minor, and the outgoing tide swirled against the pier supports and choked in the little whirlpools. There was an unpleasant, dangerous laugh from the elder man, a laugh that came out of nowhere, seemingly, and that had in it something of a dog's snarl.

"So that's the lay, eh?" he sneered. "Well, you've got something coming to all of you. I'll give you scandal if you like. I'll put the lid on this little party."

The boy could sense his arm stretched vaguely out. A note of invidious rage crept into the man's hoarse whisper.

"Here I am. There's my wife, up there—" he was pointing to the figures beneath the arc-light—"snuggling to another man's side, and planning to marry him, the shameless—"

"You had better clear," the son warned.

"Clear!" Again the laugh came. "I'm going right up there and take a hand in the game. I'm going to get my rights."

"I'll give you a chance," the son said grimly. "Will you get out and stay out?"

"I'll show them." The father was getting bitter. "I'll have my rights."

"Once again: Will you keep out?"

The father had come around in front of the son, between him and the water. He looked at the boy. Dimly, from looking at each other, they could see each other's features in the pitch-dark.

"No!" he said. "I'm going to face them. I'll have my rights. I want justice!"

"Justice!" his son repeated.

"Yes, justice!"

"Very well," the boy said calmly. He balanced himself easily on his feet, and pushed out his left arm as a range-finder. He drew back his sledgehammer right hand. "God forgive you," he muttered, and he drove it home.

He heard the dull, thudding crack as it reached the jaw, and the heavy splash that followed. He stood alone on the pier-head for a minute, listening for other sounds, but all that came to his ears was the restless movement of the pine trees, and the rush of hurrying water.

He turned and sauntered up the pier easily. His mother was looking for him anxiously.

"I was afraid," she said. "I heard a splash."

"It wasn't I," he laughed. "Probably some fish or other." He stood and looked at the pair of them. "Listen," he said quizzically. "I've been playing chaperon all day, and I'm a bit tired of it. I'm going off to shoot a game of pool. Good night."

His mother's eyes sparkled with pride as she watched his loose swinging stride, and Hunter's dimmed a little as he watched her. "She cares so much for him," the soldier thought. "I wonder does he appreciate it?"

X

WHAT BECAME OF MARGOT GILHOLME

BECAUSE never a Sunday had passed in his incumbency of the rectorship in which she had not been at service; because she had been invaluable, in her quiet way, in the organization of church social affairs, bridge parties, rummage sales, afternoon teas, what not; because everybody liked her, including himself; and lastly, and unreasonably, because he felt that her request was her right, the rector hated to refuse Mrs. Fraser the letter of introduction to the Governor of the State of New York.

She sat opposite him in the chill reception-room of the little rectory, a smiling, self-contained figure: sixty years old if a day, her face wrinkled like a ripe apple of the smaller kind, rosy; with two brown eyes glowing out of it dramatically—but repressed, as all of her was. Her mouth was small and still well colored. Her tiny hands were folded demurely in her lap. Her microscopic feet peered like mice from the edge of her black dress. A small hat hid her plentiful gray hair.

“Just a note of introduction, Doctor Crosby,” she repeated with her dogged persistence. “Just so he will see me—that’s all.”

“But the governor’s time is taken up, every minute,” the rector argued kindly. “He is not even like other governors. The greatest man in America.

There is nothing you can have to say to him, dear Mrs. Fraser. Now, tell it to me—”

“I must see the governor,” the old lady insisted. “Just a line,” she pleaded.

It was all very strange, Crosby thought, and it sounded a little as if she were out of her mind, but there was nothing to indicate that. The little millinery store on the main street of Patchogue, with models as chic as those in any New York establishment, was run with efficiency. Her dress, her manner, her speech were the same as ever in the twelve years he had known her—repressed, refined, studiously avoiding the drawing of attention to her. There was nothing out of the way about her except this crazy desire to have an interview with Stephen Godyn, the Governor of New York.

“Does your daughter, Jean, know of this, Mrs. Fraser?” the rector asked.

Mrs. Fraser’s big daughter, with the ugly, attractive face, and the level Scot’s common sense and the strong Scot’s religion, was a person Crosby admired. There was no room for crazy notions in that girl’s head.

“She does not, Doctor Crosby,” the widow answered, in a voice whose charm no plenitude of years could destroy, nor studious cultivation disguise—a voice that seemed to sing as it spoke.

She had always been a puzzle to the ascetic rector. She was out of place somehow, with that dignity, with those looks she had always repressed. He had known her for twelve years, and for eighteen before that she had been in Patchogue, keeping a little millinery store, and fighting often against heavy adversity. There were many who remembered her when she had come there thirty years ago: a self-contained woman with a baby in her arms—a baby

hardly three months old. She vouchsafed no news of herself, no news of her husband, strange though her position was. She was too good, too honest, the villagers had decided, to be a wanton woman. There was too much dignity, too much fearlessness in her face for a betrayed girl. The wife of some wastrel of good family, who had suddenly cut loose from him and had come to America to fashion for herself a new way of life. She neither affirmed their belief nor denied it. They received her good-naturedly, and gratefully she accepted the reception.

And now after thirty years of repression, after thirty years of sanity, she had burst out with the absurd request for an interview with Stephen Godyn, whom millions of people regarded as little less than a new Evangelist of democracy, for all his wealth and his patrician blood. Crosby, the ascetic cleric, one of the governor's most fervent admirers, an old acquaintance and by way of being a friend of the great man's, could not have been more surprised had she demanded an interview with the Archangel Michael.

What could she have to say, this aged, ladylike, repressed old resident, who owned a little millinery shop run by herself and her daughter, to the Governor of the Empire State, to the next President—barring the cogent politics of death—to the man the world looked to for the shaping of a new destiny for the continent? And yet, in her voice, in her eyes, in her manner, there was something that said that this request was not a vain thing, though his reason told him it must be so.

He reached for pen and paper. "Well, then, Mrs. Fraser," he acceded. "But for a small tradeswoman," he grumbled to himself, "to see Stephen Godyn . . ."

Stephen Godyn is dead now, and there is nothing my pen can write to add to the eulogies of the eloquent men who have spoken of him. Young or old, gentle or simple, who is there can forget that huge bulk of a man, like a great statue, fair-haired, blue-eyed, with his heavy, patroon features. A man who knew nothing of his family could easily have placed him as a descendant of one of the lords of the soil who held their patents in New Netherlands. A rich man, a real statesman, with a heart for the poor.

A liar could never have faced him, nor a traitor. There was an uncanny feeling that he saw through flesh and bone to the ant-like workings of the human brain. He had been proved time and time again before he was elected to the governorship of the State. All his life had been spent in public service. As clerk in the American Embassy in London, as assistant in the State Department in Washington, he knew more of the secret history of his day than it is good for the ordinary man to know. He knew of the weaknesses of kings, and why wars are started and by whom, and he understood the accent of the thunderous thing called the voice of the people—a gift given few. A great man, God rest him! A great man and a very gallant gentleman.

The day had been a hard one, and Stephen Godyn was sitting, taking his ease before dinner, in his study at the house in Albany, reading with the gusto of a boy. "The Lives and Bloody Exploits of the Most Hated Pirates" was on his knees before him and he was enjoying an interchange of courtesies between Captain Sillanny and Captain Baer of Boston. Randall, his dapper young secretary, came knocking.

"Sorry to disturb you, sir, but there's a woman here will see you. She has a letter of introduction from a rector in Patchogue, Long Island."

"The good Crosby." Godyn smiled.

"She won't say what her business is," Randall went on. "I asked her if it was a personal matter, and she said not; if it was a matter of state, and she was uncertain. Doctor Crosby's letter is very vague. She hardly seems a crank, sir."

"I'll see her," Godyn decided.

You might have known from Randall's face that it was against his inclination to allow her in. Godyn was a hard-worked man, and such leisure as he could snatch should not be at the mercy of cranks. But, still and all, there was about him an air of deference to the old woman's dignity.

"Thank you, Randall." Godyn had risen with the eternal courtesy he showed to the poor and the old.

He looked at the demure figure before him and fingered the rector's introduction.

"Mrs. Fraser?"

"Margaret Fraser," went the fleeting voice of the old lady, "Margot Gilholme, that was the 'Heather Belle.'"

"The 'Heather' . . ." Godyn was at a loss. And yet the name Margot Gilholme was familiar to him. Where? When? In what connection, now? "The 'Heather.'"

"Margot Gilholme, the 'Heather Belle.'" There was a subdued light in the old lady's eyes, and in her voice a subdued note of pride, like far-off bugles.

A few seconds' groping while the old lady still smiled, and suddenly, like the inspiration that solves a puzzle, the allusion came to him, and left him nearly gasping. Margot Gilholme! In England a name as well known once as poor Anna Held's was here. The "Heather Belle," a *nom de théâtre* affectionately bestowed by a sentimental public as inspir-

ing in its less exalted plane as that of the "Swedish Nightingale."

"Sit down, Mrs. Fraser."

He pulled a chair for her. And as he did this simple, courteous service there ran through his head the pageantry of a great time. He had never known her, but when he was in England ten years later at the Embassy he had heard older men speak of her, and wonder what had become of her. In a flash of thought he could see her as she must have been then, a beautiful woman surrounded by admirers: princes; magnificent guardsmen; foreign royalties; country squires, patrons of the Fancy and the race-course—a full-blooded, riotous assembly.

"People wondered what became of you."

"I have been on Long Island for thirty years."

As he carried on the desultory, wandering conversation the shadowy remembrances in his mind took substance and line and color, and he recollected hearing of her work in the music-halls, her Scotch ballads—haunting, nostalgic rhythms—where she trod bravely to the footlights in Highland tartan, singing the old Jacobite melodies: "Cope sent a message frae Dunbar," and "Over the Wave with Charlie!"

"How things have changed since then!" thought Godyn in platitude.

"All that time in Patchogue?"

"Myself and my daughter, Jean."

But that had been a small part of her career, Godyn remembered, and he thought of the great men whose names had been coupled with hers in light and brief loves. There had been the Grand-Duke Vassili, who had built her a castle in Little Russia; and a Balkan royalty. There had been a Prime Minister of England, dear to the late prim little queen. There

had been an American, a Titan of the financial world, in the good days when a million dollars gave rights to the title. There had been this one and that one—a full score. This little woman with the subdued voice and the luxuriant gray hair, who had a daughter in Patchogue.

“And now what can I do for you, Mrs. Fraser?” asked Stephen Godyn.

“My daughter Jean is going to be married next month to a young lawyer in New York—John Atkinson his name is—and I should like her to have a good wedding. She should have things to bring to a house—linen and the like—and business has not been good for a long while, so . . .”

“I shall be only too glad to help,” the governor said. There was a little shadow on his face; not that of disappointment, but a sort of puzzled expression as though he could not understand why she had come to him.

“It is not charity I am asking,” the old lady said, “but, in a manner of speaking, my rights.”

Stephen Godyn looked at her blankly. Was it possible, after all, that his visitor was merely an old woman with delusions? He had not asked her for proof of her statements; for to his mind, which could see clearly, her voice, her air, the crumbling fabric of old-time beauty which must have led men as the pillar of fire led the Israelites—all these were evident. Yet this statement . . .

“Because you are, as it were, the leader of the people—the hope, as a paper said, and prophet of new democracy—I came to you. I once did something big for the common people.”

Stephen Godyn said nothing. He turned and waited for her to explain.

"Your Excellency has heard of Colin Fraser—Colin Fraser of Dundee?"

Through the governor's mind there flickered again the panoramic memory of bygone days, but this time there was no trouble in placing a great name.

"Not Fraser the member of Parliament who was called the Uncrowned King of Scotland?"

"My good friend and the father of Jean," she said simply.

"He was killed," Godyn recalled.

"He was shot in his rooms in London," Mrs. Fraser amplified.

"One of the great London mysteries. The murderer was never discovered."

The old lady called Mrs. Fraser grew a little white as this was mentioned; her fingers crisped, her voice faltered. She winced, as a soldier might wince at the probing of an old wound.

"I want to tell Your Excellency about Colin Fraser," she said. "I came back from Russia in eighty-six. I was there on a visit," she explained pathetically. And Stephen Godyn knew it was to the affair with the Grand-Duke Vassili she was referring.

"I met him at the Derby."

"Your Excellency must have seen pictures of Colin Fraser, a huge man, fit to handle any crowd. Great size to him, and a big red beard; he was little over forty. His eyes were big and glazing. And I was considered very good-looking."

Stephen Godyn could well believe that. That wrinkled, ruddy face—it might once have been smooth and transparent as fine silk, the pressed lips full and darkish-red like strawberries. Her gray hair must have once trailed behind her, a mantle magnificent enough for a queen. Her hands and feet were

like those of the little women whom Gulliver knew in Lilliput.

“Colin Fraser looked at me, and I looked at Colin Fraser, and we both thought, as we saw each other: ‘Here stands Destiny.’

“In the summer of eighty-six, Your Excellency may have heard, Colin Fraser was not popular outside of Scotland. He was too arrogant, too sure of himself. He had hit landed property very hard, in his agitation about crofters’ rights, and that speech of his,” her eyes glinted proudly, “about the eviction of Highland tenantry to make deer forests for English brewers—Burke never equaled that! No! He was not liked, Colin Fraser! He was too big, too dangerous!

“They only saw him—the public did—high on a pinnacle, great as a king; but I saw him differently, I did!” She shook her head. “He was as human as any one. He could be as nervous as a girl and as heartbroken. Many’s the time he has cried on this bosom of mine, the big, red-blooded man! He had a hard life of it, Your Excellency. His wife, you must know, was a poor madwoman, in a private place in Surrey—no fault of his. A big man must have some one to lean on, as a little man must. And Colin Fraser had me.

“I loved Colin Fraser; I did so,” she told Stephen Godyn; “and Colin Fraser loved me. I had no kith or kin ever to worry about, and I was brought up careless-like, the child of strolling players; so it didn’t matter when I went to the house Colin Fraser got me—a little place in St. John’s Wood. And I was proud to be loved by him. And Colin Fraser was proud of me, too. He made no secret of it. So big a man was Colin Fraser,” she raised her eyes to Stephen Godyn, “that it didn’t matter. What

would have killed the career of another man was merely incidental in him. He was like the king—above ordinary law.

“And for two years I lived there very happy with Colin Fraser. I had my house, the prettiest house in London. I had a little carriage with two ponies, and a tiger to jump from the back seat and run to their heads when I stopped. I rode in the Row regardless of any eyes, looked at, envied by all, for I was loved by Colin Fraser,” she told Stephen Godyn proudly; “and Colin was the greatest man in the land.

“And for two years Colin Fraser and I lived very happily there; and one day I told him that he was going to have a baby, and Colin was happy at that, for you see, Your Excellency, Colin knew he was the only one I loved, and that the others meant nothing, but the fault of my upbringing, being the child of strolling players.” Stephen Godyn nodded his wise, leonine head. “Life for me began only when I met Colin Fraser.

“And all this time he grew bigger. He could have been anything in the land except king; and that there might be a higher one in the land than him irked Colin Fraser. Every man has his faults, the great men included, if Your Excellency will pardon me; and Colin’s fault was ambition.

“There is one man in English history who was higher than a king: Warwick, who made and broke kings. And, God forgive Colin, but his ambition rose as high as Warwick’s duty. Smooth-shaven, tricky men—foreigners mainly, French and Italian—kept coming to see Colin, and it was a long time before I knew what was afoot; but, when I understood it, my heart sank in me. In Scotland where the Highland people are, and in Ireland among the old gentry, and

in Wales parts, too, and in England, there are a host whose traditions are bound up in old days when the Stuarts were kings in England.

"There is more to this than meets the eye, as Your Excellency can well see. The Stuarts left are the royalty of Bavaria, and behind a sentimental uprising there would be great force of arms—a dangerous affair, when you look into it. And I saw into it, because, for reasons, I knew something of state affairs."

Here her manner became strained and Stephen Godyn lowered his head sympathetically, for she was speaking of those intimates of hers before Colin Fraser came.

"But the poor, exalted gentry never saw inside of the scheme. They thought only of the cavaliers, of white roses, of new glorious days. And there was, as I said, a host of them—all though the Highlands of Scotland, in Edinburgh even, through the Kingdom of Fife; north among the people who talk the Gadhlig, and through the islands on the coast. And in England there was many a thousand involved, for the thing looked feasible. In Ireland there were many; they have fled overseas since, on account of it, for in Ireland there is always a traitor, to sell names. There was O'Hanlon Roe, and the Master of the Rosses, and the Earl of Glenties, and Sir Firdaragh Campbell—very honest gentlemen, all of them, very noble; they cared nothing for their lives.

"The scheme went ahead, and grew fast. It is strange how revolutions come up unnoticed. They rise and burst in a day, like a storm. These men had plans laid for ships of war to slip from the Continent and hammer England unexpectedly. There was to be a landing in Scotland as there was in forty-five and a march on London. There were Highland regiments

disaffected, only too ready to march out, pipes skirling under the ancient banner. In Ireland the Fenians were powerful, though still in hiding after sixty-seven. The canny Welsh were ready to jump, if they saw it to their profit. And there was great money spent, and cogent figures shown. And Colin Fraser was the mainspring of the movement. He was to be the new Warwick, the new General Monk.

"I heard of it. I knew of it. I spoke to Colin.

"'Are you daft, Colin Fraser?' I said.

"'You'll mind your own affairs, lassie,' he told me sharply.

"This was the one thing he never spoke to me about, knowing I'd be against it, no matter what he could say. Oh, it would have been so ridiculous, Your Excellency, if it hadn't been so sinister! Right or wrong, I couldn't see the force of it. All I could see was destruction and turmoil, the foreigner hammering at England with sea-guns; the decent Highland clansmen in bloody heaps; the misguided nobles killed or hanged for traitors, and the bonny Irish gentlemen. That was all I could see, Your Excellency, and that was enough."

Stephen Godyn nodded slowly.

"I wondered when it was coming, and what could be done, but I heard nothing until one day Colin came to see me. He was going back to his chambers in town.

"'What are you smiling for, man Colin?' I asked.

"'Because to-night I'm going to decide when history's to be made.'

"'It'll be bad history, Colin!'

"'Good or bad,' quo' he, 'it'll be my word'll make it.'

"I worried when he had gone. If Colin had believed in what he was doing, heart and soul, I should

have been with him in it. But it was his ambition, and it was nowise right. It might be a success, I thought, and there would still be this blood wasted, and the stranger, I knew, would be inside our gates. And if it were not a success, there would be Colin, a traitor to the king, his crown and majesty, to be shot up against a wall, some gray morning.

"I don't know what got inside of me, but I followed him, without telling a soul, to his flat in London, and I went in with my own key. There was no one but himself—his man had gone out for something. Colin was at a table, writing. It must have had to do with the rising, what he was writing about, for his big pistol was on the table beside him, so," she explained to Stephen Godyn, "if any one interrupted the secret, he would have been a killed man.

"He turned to me, surprised. 'What is it, lassie?' he asked.

"'The men mustn't go out, Colin,' I told him. 'They mustn't go out.'

"'You will mind your own affair,' he roared. It was the first time he had spoken harshly to me.

"'It must not take place,' I told him.

"He stood up, the fine big man, like a giant; I remember him well. His great red beard bristling, and his eyes were flashing, fine to see. I loved him very much," she said to Stephen Godyn, "and under my heart his baby was moving.

"'It will take place,' he said, and I knew neither heaven nor hell would move him.

"I picked up the pistol that was lying on the desk. 'It will not take place, man Colin,' said I, and I shot him between the eyes."

The bridegroom and the bride had left among acclamations, and the wedding guests were going off

in threes and twos. Doctor Crosby, the ascetic celebrant of the ritual, shook hands with Mrs. Fraser.

"A fine young man! And a very happy couple they make," he unbent. He glanced with a feeling of faint disapproval at the profusion of the wedding breakfast, the decorations, what not. "I do think it rather foolish of you to have lavished money on the ceremony as you have." It was merely his good heart, of course, but the man was tactless. "For a suburban milliner's daughter . . ."

XI

BEULAH LAND

HE DROPPED the newspaper from his hands, and, with his jaw thrust forward and a dim haze over his eyes, he gazed into the glowing coal fire in the immense drawing-room. So Zion had arisen at last! Zion, the incomparable city! Zion, the hope and home of millions! Out of the tearful dreams of centuries, the stones of the Temple were taking substance as by strange magic.

Zion was here!

He took the paper up again, and the mist passed from his eyes as he read of the rout of the Ottoman armies before the smiling, sedate Allenby, and of the proposal of the British to found in the ancient soil a free Hebrew state, such as had obtained there before the Babylonians and the swarthy, arrogant Romans had been sent to smite his people for their sins. His eyes blazed as he thought of the Moslem hordes reeling back.

And there were Jews with General Allenby, too—fighting for their ancient patrimony.

And Zion had arisen!

“I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria,” he quoted the Promise, “and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon.”

You might have taken Sassoon for an Arab or an Afghan as he sat there in front of the fire, what with

his high cheek-bones, his fiery black eyes, and the swarthy, sun-tanned tint he never lost.

His stocky muscular figure, too—that seemed to be more fitting for a cavalryman or a wrestler than for the intrepid financier who, with Rothschild, and Garetti of Italy, and Carcassonne of France, had held the reins of plunging international credit while the world weltered in battle. Every one who saw him for the first time was surprised.

“I didn’t think . . .” they would begin embarrassedly, and then stop, a little flushed.

Sassoon would smile wryly.

“You expected to find a patriarchal beard, a vulture’s nose, mean eyes,” he would think, “hands twitching for money. Such, you thought, would be the Jewish banker.” But he said nothing, not from a sense of cowardice but from dignity.

“I thought—” they would cover up their embarrassment—“you were an older man.”

“I am fifty.”

“You look thirty-five.”

His wife, Miriam, seated at the huge piano, not playing but dreaming, and occasionally stealing a glance at Sassoon—her you would have known for a Jewess immediately. Even at thirty-six she was a slim woman, and had not lost the beauty of her early years. The blackness of her hair, black as blue, the smoldering fire in her eyes, her swarthy, passionate coloring—she was unmistakably racial as her namesake, Miriam, sister of Moses, who danced to timbrels after the crossing of the Red Sea.

“Sassoon,” she called, “what are you thinking of?” She had watched him gaze into the fire long enough.

“Our hope has not yet gone,” he quoted the refrain from the song “Ha-Tikvah,” “the old hope

to return to the land of our fathers, to the city where David lived.' We're going back." He stood up quickly, and, walking over to her, he took her by the arms. "We're going back, Miriam, right away, to the city where David lived!"

His eyes were sparkling with his dream, but hers were troubled. She had no child, nor could she ever have one. All she had was Sassoon—her husband, her lover. And she wanted to be sure that he would be happy, that the things he did should be the right things.

II

From his earliest childhood, in Lisbon, he had been saturated in the dream of Zion. His mother, a proud Mendoza, and his father, the gentle little banker with the pathetic eyes and the long beard, lived innerly that fierce, intensive racial life which the families had hoarded since the days of the Inquisition, when the portion of a Jew was not death but indignity, torture, degradation—death in life.

With the glowing enmity of generations, they both told young Peter Sassoon of their people's suffering.

He could remember his mother, tall and slim, and straight like a drawn sword, her face glowing with spiritual flame, recounting the sufferings of his people, and then standing up proudly, with tears dimming her great black eyes, while she chanted the "Zionide" of Judah Ha-Levi:

Zion, wilt thou not send a greeting to thy captives,
Who greet thee as the remnant of thy flocks?
From east to west, from north to south, a greeting;
From far and near take thou on all sides!

A greeting sends the captive of desire, who sheds his
tears
Like dew on Hermon; would they might fall on thy
hills!

And so, hour by hour, day by day, month by month, there arose in his mind the fabric of the ancient country. In long, graceful lines and in definite colors, now restrained, now violent and dramatic, he could see Jerusalem, the delectable city. He could see the great Temple which Solomon builded on the site of the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. Now against its crumbling ruins, old men beat their heads. "O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance!" they cry. "They have laid Jerusalem on heaps. We are become a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us. How long, Lord? Wilt thou be angry forever? Shall thy jealousy burn like fire?" He could see the tomb of David, with its terraces and olive trees bathed in sunshine. In his mind he could see the oaks of Mamre, where Abraham pitched his tent. All that was theirs; Zion, which was now a captive, one day would belong to his people again. So went the promise of the Lord.

He might have remained all his life in Lisbon, dreaming fiercely, as his mother dreamed, and helping his father in the bank, had not the old man died unexpectedly one Sabbath in the synagogue. He sat down suddenly, put his hand to his heart, gasped, looked wildly up to the balcony where his wife was, and collapsed from heart-disease. And his son rent his garments, as the custom is, and said Kaddish for him, and he was laid away to rest.

I don't know how it is these people of the East love. There is an intensity to it that we Westerners, with our complex, diverse interests, can never at-

tain. They become bound to one another with clamps of tempered steel, become the perfect unity that all love is. When one part dies, the other dies also. So, three weeks later, the wife of old Sassoon, who was a Mendoza, died quietly in her chair with a look of expectancy on her face, as though she had heard her name called. And for her, too, her son rent his garments and said Kaddish, and she was laid by the side of her husband in the House of Peace.

He might have remained in Lisbon, might Peter Sassoon, and have become the greatest financier Portugal had ever seen. He might have gone to Paris or Madrid or any of the European capitals, and there made a name as big as it is in our country to-day. But the tragedy of his people lay in dark stains, and hidden, fetid prison-chambers in each one of them, and he would have none of them.

"I will go to Palestine," he said. And then his eye flashed proudly. "I will not go to Palestine until Palestine is free."

But there was somewhere else he might go, and his heart leaped at the thought of it. Already through the narrow ghettos of Europe the word ran that overseas was a great country where all men were free. From the Pale of Russia, where the muzhiks were craving blood; from Budapest, where the Jews went by fearfully in their clumsy gaberdines; from Spain the haughty, and Portugal the proud, Israel was making a last exodus to a new world. There the huckster in the street had his chance, and the manufacturer put up his purring looms, and in the colleges the brilliant youth of Israel matched brains against the pick of the virgin continent. Even in the fertile New England States, the Jews had reverted to their original calling, and tilled the land, as they once did,

twenty years ago, by Nazareth and Galilee. There, too, would he go and abide with his people.

"Until Zion come . . ." he murmured.

III

It was Schuyler who gave young Sassoon his chance; Schuyler, the greatest of the bankers, as sinister-looking—what with his drooping black mustache, his black eyes, his black cigar—as any pirate of the days of Kidd; three times savior of his country, a picker of men. To him Sassoon went fearlessly, and Schuyler, in five minutes, sent him to be trained for charge of the foreign credits.

"Why in blazes," asked one of Schuyler's friends, "did you give that Jewish boy such a chance?"

"Wait and see," Schuyler smiled.

There is a belief abroad that Schuyler never made a mistake. Of course he made mistakes, time and time again; but he made no mistake in picking Peter Sassoon. Little by little the grip of new fingers could be felt in national finance; not a nervous, grasping grip, but a firm, steady hand.

"That's Schuyler's man, Sassoon." The shrewd bankers nodded.

They recognized quickly the reasons why Schuyler had picked him. They saw his genius, when, reaching out, he picked up and took charge of a South American republic rich in ore and nitrates, and, saving it from ruin, started it on a strict business schedule, with himself running everything from president to police—and running it well.

"But aren't you afraid," he was asked, "of a revolution taking place and all your holdings being confiscated?"

"I am afraid of nothing," Sassoon replied quietly, without any boastfulness, merely stating a fact.

This intrepid financial genius, this fearlessness would have been enough to make his name, but added to that was his impeccable honesty. In the open game of finance he was ruthless against an opponent who dared and offered to fight him for supremacy, always according to rule, and recognized fair play. But his fingers were never soiled with any shady transactions. He never hired a corporation lawyer to help him evade the law of the land. He never plundered the weak.

"I have heard," drawled Calhoun, the Senator from Georgia, a notorious Judeophobe, "that every one is entitled to his pet Jew. I know of no pet Jews, but I know of one honest one—Peter Sassoon."

That did not please Sassoon. Praise for himself meant nothing, but condemnation of his people enraged him. But what was to be done about it? Nothing! Until Zion come . . .

To his people, the fearless *Spanol* Jew seemed a redeemer. In no activity of theirs was he missing. Into those palatial offices of his on Broad Street, New York, any one of his religion was admitted, from the East Side schnorrer and the peddler to the great merchant and the legislator. And time that was worth thousands of dollars to him was spent freely in assisting them in their troubles, giving them counsel, laying out plans. He lent them money freely, knowing every cent of it would be returned.

"I tell it you, Mr. Sassoon," a little Galician, whom he had pulled from the edge of bankruptcy, broke in on him in voluble, singsong Yiddish. "When I leave Galicia, I think in this country the greatest chance in the world. I think it the money come easily here, *pavolye!* But I got to work, and I'm happy working.

We're all happy working and making money, but bad times come, and it is hard and we get discouraged. Until you came there was nobody to help us. But you came and—*gewahlt!* it is like heaven!"

"Here is it all right," said Peter Sassoon, "until Zion come . . ."

"To me—" the little *Galiz* threw his hands out proudly—"to me, it is Zion here!"

IV

He was thirty-five years old and already an international figure when he met Miriam Mendel, daughter of the old patriarch who had come out of Kiev to America and was acknowledged to be the greatest furrier in the world. Up in the North, farther than the Hudson Bay men go, his agents travel for the pelts of silver foxes. At the fair of Nijni Novgorod they are known, and at Leipzig, at the great March *Messe*. Shrewd men, those agents of his, none shrewder in the world; and their nod of the head is as good as their bond.

If Peter Sassoon had not happened along, I don't believe Jacob Mendel would have given Miriam to any man. For Miriam was all he had, and he knew the worth of that one daughter. The spirit that was in Jacob Mendel was placid and great and very deep, like the sea, but the spirit of his daughter was black and white-topped, and aglow with great passions, like a mountain lake. And she was very beautiful.

"She looks like Jael," the elder Miss Brown, of the Misses Brown's School for Young Ladies, said, when Miriam was brought to her, "or like Jephthah's daughter."

The elder Miss Brown, for all her lack of knowledge of worldly things, was in a measure right.

Miriam was a maid of Israel, a maid out of old-time, when the Jewish women followed the hosting through the desert, led by the burning cloud. She stood out, among that pretty aggregation of bankers' daughters, like a flame.

She went through Vassar and she came to New York, and she was in due course offered for marriage at dances and lunches and afternoon teas. There were a host of bidders, for, even without the Mendel millions, she had fire enough and beauty enough to electrify the most placid of men. But she would have none of them.

"For whom are you waiting then, for whom?" little Klotz, the department-store man, gesticulated in hysterical anger. He usually got what he wanted, did little Klotz.

"I am waiting for my man," she told him quietly.

The dapper little trader went to her father, "to talk reason," as he put it.

"Why don't she take me?" he demanded hotly. "Amn't I wealthy enough, and healthy enough? Amn't I as good-looking as any one else she will get? She wants her man? Well, I'm her man, as much as any one else is."

Old Jacob Mendel looked him up and down for a minute, much as though he were examining a pelt. He grimaced, as he would grimace if a pelt were rotten.

"You're not," he said calmly. And there the matter ended.

It was at a dance at Sherry's that Miriam met Peter Sassoon. It was seldom he came to dances, but to this he came, because it would have hurt some friends had he not appeared; and, for all his strength and vigor, he would hurt nobody's feelings. He swung into the room, a lunging, muscular figure, who

ld have been more at home on a horse in the rt than dancing a waltz in a ball-room. On his d of introductions he stopped at Miriam Men- Something in the girl's high head and shining arrested him.

I suppose I should ask you to dance, but I dance badly," he said bluntly.

He laid her hand on his arm.

You needn't." She was every bit as direct as he. I would like to talk to you, Peter Sassoon."

They talked very little that night, and very little toward; they just looked at each other with a vague question in their eyes. They looked probably; they looked warily, and then, suddenly, the eyes grew clear, as though all questions were answered, Peter and Miriam knew they had come together that day.

They met several times after that, and between them there still existed that dramatic, eloquent silence, broken only by amenities of conversation.

That day came when Sassoon took her left hand in two brown ones.

Will you marry me, Miriam," he said bluntly—new no other way—"and stay by me always? Because I love you."

I will," she said, and her eyes were shining, "because I love you, too, Peter Sassoon."

They spoke very little even after that. It seemed somehow of them that the physical coverings of their senses were laid entirely aside. The mechanics of speech were no longer there—tongue, palate, lips or throat. Together their hearts were singing the immense diapason of the stars. "I sleep, but my heart is awake"—the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's, sounded in her heart like cymbals—"it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me,

my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew." "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse," in Sassoon's mind the glorious love-song answered—"thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. . . . How much better is thy love than wine!"

He went to her father proudly.

"I am in love with your daughter, Jacob Mendel," he said, "and she is with me."

"I am very glad, Sassoon." The fur king hesitated not one moment.

And so they were married, and he took her to live in the great house he had bought for them in Westchester, a place of hills and valleys and gaunt, splendid rocks, such as might be about the Jordan or Kedron stream. And in the distance they could see the Sound, placid as the sea called Galilee, dotted here and there with a sail, and ruffled at times by the wind into microscopic hills and ridges. And in the evenings he would go with her into the old-fashioned garden in the dusk, and, sitting by her there, he would tell her of his dreams and of his youth. And, as the dusk gathered into night, she—hardly visible, very sentient—would put out her hand and catch his, and as his throbbing voice went on, by a soft pressure now, by a hard one then, she would signify that her soul was drinking in every word.

"Not in my time, Miriam, nor in your time will Zion come. But one day . . ."

And little by little, under the soft influence of his caring for his wife Miriam, the harsh drama of Sassoon's vision of Zion blurred into pale, delicate outlines. Gone for a time was the splendor of the Temple and the troubled waters of Bethesda Pool, and in its place there rose in his mind a vision of

Magdala, the village whence his family came. A wide valley, it was described, between two pleasant hills, and tall, feathery trees about the cliffs. Bees hummed going to and from their hives in the rocks, and the sun shot the little watercourse with iridescence. Butterflies and dragon-flies hovered above the anemones and squills and in the foreground of all, in her white robe, with her black eyes and her dark commanding face, was Miriam, a Jewish maid.

And so, married, they lived happily but for one thing: the promise to Abraham was not fulfilled in Sassoon, and Miriam had no child. It would have come to her as the crowning moment in her love, but there had to be some bitter disappointment, she felt, for all that she was getting. Sassoon knew, and enveloped her with tenderness for it. It hurt him, too.

Everywhere together they went, except for the occasions of his business. Through fifteen years she walked proudly as a queen, glad to be wife to a man like Sassoon, proud to be admitted to his thoughts, to be near the soul of him. Every moment proud of him. Every moment fearful lest something should happen to him—not a mere physical reality but something that might hurt or destroy his bigness, or turn him aside from the great, right things. She had no child, you see; she had nothing but Sassoon.

v

He spoke continually of his vision of a new Zion, to the rabbis he knew, and they grew sympathetic toward his fervor, and quoted for him texts from Jeremiah, and Lamentations, and Joel, to prove that it should come, and from Uriah and Amos. But their vision was a dull thing of dry Talmudic books, and they obscured it with strange interpretations, and

hazy corollaries. And that did not satisfy Sassoon.

He spoke of it once to a young artist of some talent, a slim Jewish boy, and told him, in a moment of enthusiasm, how he would like to go back to David's city.

"Say, brother," the boy's voice cackled; "you don't know nothing about it. I've been there. I was on a tour over the world when I married my girl. Listen, friend: There ain't nothing there—just stone, stones and sand. You don't want to go there. Why don't you go down to Lakewood?"

"And they call you an artist!" Sassoon sneered inwardly. Outwardly, his face flushed, and his mouth crept into a thin, straight line.

He had been invited—a great compliment—to a little dinner at an Irish club by five or six of New York's foremost Irishmen. It had passed off, talking of city and state and national politics and of the reconstruction work after the war. That, too, passed, and the old men began talking of bygone times in Ireland and of the struggles in New York when the Tiger padded Fourteenth Street with soft, treacherous steps.

"Give us one of the old songs, Tim," some one asked.

A red-faced, white-haired judge of the Supreme Court shook his head.

"No more," he refused laughingly; "those days are by."

"'By,' be damned!" There was the clanging protest of glasses on the table. The old judge laughed and rose.

"Well then:

"The French are on the sea,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
The French are on the sea,

Says the Shan Van Vocht.
The French are on the sea,
They'll be here by break of day;
And the Orange will decay,
Says the Shan Van Vocht."

The old rebel song rang through the club, and, as the verses went on, Sassoon told himself here was a race he would never understand. The old judge he knew for one of the greatest supporters of the Allied cause during the war. He had advocated hanging in the public square all the lurking spies in America. He had publicly wept when Ireland refused to line up to her duty in civilization. And yet, here he was, singing a rebel song!

"And will Ireland then be free?
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
And will Ireland then be free?
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
Yes; Ireland will be free,
From the centre to the sea;
And hurrah for liberty,
Says the Shan Van Vocht"

He turned to the judge when the song was over. "When Ireland is free," Sassoon said, "you expect to go back?"

"I do not," Judge Ryan answered. "My place is here."

"It seems to mean so much to your people, and you say they will not go back. What is the use, then, of all these feelings, all these songs?"

The white-haired old jurist laid his hand on Sassoon's knee. He smiled.

"Here is the use, Sassoon," he said cryptically: "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."

VI

It was four in the morning now, and it had been dawn since then, a faint, mauve dawn of June, and still Sassoon was walking about the city. To-day was the great day—the day when the miracle would be proved. To-day he sailed for Zion, David's city, which, according to the Promise, had arisen from the dead, and on whose hills and valleys, whose flat roofs and bellying minarets, the sun of freedom shone, as it shone in the days of the magnificence of Solomon the king.

He had wound up his business at the bank, selling his various holdings and converting them into securities which he could bring with him to Palestine. And to his associates he had said good-by. He noted a lack of enthusiasm in their voices. Behind their eyes was a disappointed, hard look. Kemp, of the United Oil Company, had suddenly blazed into a sort of anger.

"If I were to tell you what I think . . ." the hawk-faced Yankee snapped.

"What is wrong, Kemp?" Sassoon was surprised.

"Oh, nothing!" Kemp barked, and bade him good-by unceremoniously.

At his house, too, on Madison Avenue, matters were not right. In the eyes of his wife Miriam trouble lurked like a pale ghost. He had wanted to sell everything, and to take with them just a few dear things.

"No, Sassoon," she protested; "you can leave that to your friends, who will do it—when we go."

And he had taken passage for both of them from New York to Southampton, across France to Marseilles, to Port Said, to Jaffa. And to-day, at noon, they sailed. As yet, eight hours . . .

He had telephoned he would not be home to dinner and had spent the afternoon going about places where his people were, the lowest and poorest of them. Up Second Avenue he had come—the deep, dark gulch where the elevated rumbles like sudden thunder. Every stone, every house had a call to him. Here was a Hebrew bank he had, ten years ago, saved from ruin; there a squat synagogue, whither he had gone to pray for the soul of an old friend. All about swarmed his people, hustling, grimy, dramatic, talking in voluble, guttural Yiddish. The old-clothes men came and went, drooping under their burdens. He shook his head at the pawnshops with their Medici device of the golden spheres—one traffic he liked not at all; there was too much misery in it. He stopped outside a Jewish saloon where two men within were sipping golden plum brandy.

"Lacheim!" went one's salutation

"Sholem!" came the response.

Over there, to the right, was a moving-picture theater, the garish posters lettered in Hebraic script. Next door, a restaurant with a white-enameled Yiddish motto on its window—upright, sweeping majuscules with unexpected angles, dots, and dashes.

As he passed a street on his way north, he remembered that to the left on the Bowery was the theater where Tomashefsky's voice resounded in sweeping Jewish diction as he depicted the drama of his people—the release from Egypt, the fall of Jericho, the building of the Temple.

Hour to hour went by, and still he wandered about, savoring, as one savors old memories, the nearness and greatness of his people in this alien land. He dropped into the little cafés where the young Jewish poets sat playing chess, and the older men stood by, watching pawn and queen move, and

bishop and king. Everywhere there was an ovation for him.

"Mr. Sassoon!" The place was cleared for him. It was as though Harun-al-Rashid were passing by night through Bagdad's streets.

"To-morrow," he told them, "to-morrow, I leave for Zion!"

"And when do you come back, Mr. Sassoon?" an old man asked.

"I will never come back," Sassoon said. "In David's city I stay."

The young poets applauded violently. The elder men looked grave. There was one who cried.

And so from place to place and from street to street Sassoon went, storing in his heart the memory of the city and the country which had meant so much to his people.

Here, up in the Bronx, around Simpson Street, they gathered, a hill of busy, thriving ants. On every second apartment was a doctor's name, or the name of a dentist with a familiar racial ring. Out of the East they had come, and out of Europe, where they were oppressed, and here they had found welcome and a chance to use their brains and science. They had thrived and prospered and were living in peace and respect by the side of the other factors that made up the formula of a free country.

Dawn broke in the air, and to him it was a shock, for he had no idea time had passed so rapidly. He turned to find a taxicab. A big Irish policeman was appealed to for help. The officer looked at him keenly.

"You're Mr. Sassoon, the banker," he said. "I seen your picture in the papers many a time. Hey, Jim!" he shouted across to a garage. "If I'm not

making too free," he went on, "I see in the papers that you're going to leave us."

"I am," Sassoon smiled.

"A great pity, that!" The policeman shook his head. "The country needs you."

He opened the door of the cab. He turned to the chauffeur.

"Take Mr. Sassoon home, Tim," he directed, "and take him home quick and safe, or I'll have the skin off your bones."

"Thanks, Officer," Sassoon laughed; "and good-by!"

The policeman took off his cap as he shook hands.

"God be good to you, Mr. Sassoon!" he said simply. "You were good to the poor."

He would not lie down, Sassoon decided. He would turn in under a shower and wait for Miriam's rising. It was too big a day to sleep. He hoped Miriam was sleeping well, for the start on the voyage would be fatiguing.

But Miriam was not sleeping. She was sitting awake, dry-eyed, tense, troubled. There was something wrong, she knew. It was the first time she had had the opportunity to help him, and help him she would, if anything could help him. His greatness, his fineness—those were the things that mattered, and which she did not want to see warped or wrongly directed. She had no child. She had nothing but Sassoon.

VII

He expected to slip in unnoticed, but she met him at the door, firm-faced, with shadows under her fine eyes and inside them a great, controlled agony. He was too exalted to notice anything.

"There is some one wants to see you, Sassoon," she said.

"At this hour?"

"The little woman from the corner news-stand."

He went into the morning-room, and sitting on the edge of a chair, fearfully, was a little Polish woman of the people. He remembered somehow having seen her before. She rose up, breathing hard.

"Mr. Sassoon—" she broke into singing Yiddish, with a note of hysteria—"I hear it you go away. And what will become of us, Mr. Sassoon; what will become of us?" Sassoon looked at her in astonishment. He got no opportunity to speak. She went on: "I got it a little money in your bank, all I got in the world. I want it to send my boy to college, so that he be a doctor. All the time I say, 'When he grows up I go to Mr. Sassoon, and I ask him what I should do.' And when he grows up now, I cannot go to Mr. Sassoon. And none of us can go to Mr. Sassoon. Because Mr. Sassoon will be gone away. *Gewahlt!* What shall we do? Who will take care of us, now that Mr. Sassoon is gone?"

Miriam went over and touched her hand.

"Sit down, mother, and wait a little. Sassoon—" she turned to her husband—"come upstairs; I want to speak to you."

She led the way to his big study on the upper floor, the dim room with the great windows and the balcony. He closed the door after them. She turned to him. Her hands fell to her side.

"Sassoon," she quavered. "I will not go with you."

He looked at her blankly.

"I will not go with you, Sassoon." Her hands clinched like steel bands. "Because it is not right, I will not go."

“Miriam,” his voice was very gentle, “I do not understand you. What is not right?”

“Sassoon—” her voice rose and fell in nervous, musical surges, like the quavering of a violin, and there were sobs behind it, and tears—“Sassoon, when things got too bad in Russia, when the *pogrometzky* were running through the streets screaming for Jewish blood, when all through the Caucasus a Jew was never free from danger and insult—through Germany, through Bulgaria—they came here. If you had asked my father, Jacob Mendel, who is dead, he would have told you stories that would have made your blood cold and your skin like the skin of a goose. But you never looked for facts, Sassoon. You wanted dreams.”

She moved nearer him. She put her hand up.

“Wait, Sassoon! They came here, and they were happy and they got their chance. And you came to them. And you cared for them and you taught them. You were never tired imploring them to understand and feel the duties of a new citizenship, to show all the world what the Jew is. When the war broke out, it was you who went about, sending your own people into battle. There were times you saved this country from financial ruin. You leave it now. It is not right, Sassoon.”

Through the faint shadows of dawn, the slim, sword-like figure of her, the burning eyes, the set face, the white, dramatic hands showed dimly, like some oracle in a temple of old Greece.

“Listen, Sassoon.” Her voice set suddenly. “I was at lunch downtown on Tuesday, and sitting near me were two women. They were talking about you. ‘He’s going to Palestine,’ one of them said. And then the other: ‘He’s made his money,’ she laughed, ‘and now he’s going off with it.’ And the first one laughed,

too. 'It's the way of the Yid,' she sneered. Wince, Sassoon, wince! 'The way of the Yid'!"

Erect and motionless, he listened to her. His face had become furrowed granite, and his frame carved stone.

"Oh, Sassoon—" she had dropped to her knees, and on her cheeks tears suddenly appeared like dew—"you want the bridal land, the land of Beulah! Why, here is Beulah Land! Oh, Sassoon, blind one, cannot you see? Not even in Palestine is Zion; but when we are dead, there is David's city!"

The lines in his face softened and his eyes grew dim.

Miriam stood up.

"I love you, Sassoon!" Her voice had developed a deep crooning. "I love you as no woman ever could. If you were poor and broken, I would sell the hair off my head for you. If you are in trouble, I am in trouble, too. If you were dead, I, too, should die. But by the High One, Sassoon, if you go, you go alone. For you are not doing a right thing." Her voice rose suddenly like a bugle. "You are deserting the place that made you and that you helped make."

She moved to the door suddenly, and, opening it, passed out. She turned for a minute with all the agony of her eyes focused on him.

"Oh, Sassoon," she pleaded, "dream greater than Zion's walls!"

He walked toward the windows in a daze, as a sleeper might who had been roughly awakened and is not yet quite conscious, and, opening them, he stepped out on the balcony. Eastward, the sun had now come up a little along the horizon and, struggling with massive gray-and-white cloud banks, was seeking to break through, here and there in red blotches, here and there in long, white, spear-like

rays. Below, over the street, milk-carts rattled. A few blocks away came the booming of the elevated on Third Avenue.

But Sassoon was seeing none of these things. Through his mind there was running still the itinerary of the day before—the narrow, crowded gulches of Second Avenue, with their struggling, happy merchants; the little, dingy synagogues; the queer restaurants where his people ate their food in peace.

“In peace!” he thought aloud. “In happiness and peace!”

For so many years had the thought of Zion been in his mind that it continually obtruded itself on his thoughts, like a presuming person. But his wife’s words came to his mind, and again a mist crept over his eyes.

“David’s city! When we are dead . . .”

It was as though some formula of white magic had been uttered, for as he stood there clutching the balustrade, the pathetic stones of the Temple hushed their voices, and into his mind there came joyously, on tramping feet, a vision of his people coming out of bondage into the Free Land.

All through New York they were, all through America, working against ancient prejudices, overcoming them, beating them down. There was no question of conquest, none of rapacity. They came joyously, out of their fetid ghettos, to breathe pure air.

He threw his head high in exaltation, and his eye caught a glimpse of a cloud above him, a white cirrus that the dawn-wind was blowing about, and as he watched it, it took form suddenly into the six-pointed star of David. He dropped his eyes as though before a miracle.

“Beulah Land!”

He turned suddenly, joyously, for in his heart there were cymbals clashing and the thrumming of harps, to go downstairs to Miriam. She was waiting for him, he knew. But he did not know she was on her knees, praying as she had never prayed before. If he went, she had decided, he must go without her, and if he went without her, she should surely die. For he was all the world to her. She had no child. She had nothing but Sassoon.

XII

THE WIFE OF THE RED-HAIRED MAN

THE faint and varied night noises of Columbus Avenue filtered into the sitting-room of the tiny flat like inquisitive intruders. There would come, at first, the faint grinding of a street-car and the clang of its bell. Automobiles would purr noisily like gigantic cats; then unexpectedly their horns would bark viciously like dogs. A belated dray would creak by. And then, as a climax, the rhythmic galloping of the elevated, which shook the panes in the window and the pictures on the wall and gave to the table and the gas-lamp upon it a faint vibration.

The old woman had dropped her knitting on to her lap and was looking a trifle nervously at the clear-cut young judge sitting before her.

"Yes, Patrick?"

"It's this way, Mother," Judge Campbell continued. "There's no guarantee of my being here from one day to another. With the new campaign coming on, I shall be away for months at a time. There's a possibility of my being sent to France on a diplomatic mission. And then, Mother, where would you be?"

"But Patrick, there's John. You're forgetting John."

"Oh John!" The judge gave a faint scowl of impatience.

"Now, Patrick, I don't want you to be saying a word against your brother."

The judge leaned forward intently. In his well-cut morning clothes and glistening collar, he seemed queerly out of place in the worn and homelike flat. One could trace in his waving black hair and gray eyes and subtly chiseled judicial face the relationship between him and the white-haired old lady. But there was something that differentiated them. He suggested the popular reformer, the fashionable jurist, the political rhetorician; but about her, in spite of her thirty-five years in America, there still hung like a vague perfume the purple color of the Antrim hills, the strong, salt breeze of the Irish Channel, the grace-notes of pipers, the heathery incense of the peat. Nothing had changed her; nor could have changed her from what she was, the daughter of a strong farmer, peasant of the peasantry.

"Mother, I'm not saying a word against John; but we've got to face facts. John is absolutely irresponsible. How many positions has he thrown up within the last two years? He was assistant engineer on the *Moravia*. He threw that up to go on a wild-goose chase after a gold-mine in British Guiana. He comes back from there and works two months in New York; then—heigh-ho!—he leaves with a disreputable ruffian to start a line of river-boats up the Magdalena. How long do you think he will stick to this place with the steel corporation?" His voice had risen unconsciously. "Well, I can tell you—"

"Now, Patrick, now," she admonished gently; but there was an undercurrent of firmness in her voice.

"Listen, Mother," he continued. "If you'd only do as I ask you, if you'd only let them take care of you at that little Home on Staten Island, my mind would be at rest for good and all. You saw the

place. You'll have the prettiest and best room in it. You can see all your friends. You'll be as much at home there as in this dingy hole. And it won't be as though it were charity. You've got your nine thousand dollars. That will make you independent. Think of it, Mother: you alone here, a woman of fifty-eight, with nobody except John, the irresponsible John, to take care of you. You don't know how it harasses me."

She looked around the little sitting-room.

"It's hard. That's what it is," she said. "It's very hard."

From the worn red cloth that covered the table, to the photographs on the wall, all meant home to her: the green carpet, the gas-lamp with the mica shade, the what-not by the window corner, filled with the accumulation of years—a sea-shell, a framed photograph of Patrick in his municipal magistrate's gown, a microscopic reproduction of the White House in which one day her son Patrick might be, a hundred other things meaningless to anybody but her. On the walls were a picture of Martin Luther, kindly and shrewd; Robert Emmet, gallant in his green uniform and ruffles; Patrick, with his law-diploma, in his pale face sternness and ambition; John, the bluff, tanned John in the brass buttons of a second assistant engineer. She would not have those in the Old Ladies' Home. The room would be spick and span, sparsely furnished, and hideously austere.

"Oh, it's hard," she repeated. "It's hard, surely!"

The clatter and din of the avenue without had been intermittently advancing and retiring into the room like the wash of a tide. The elevated clattered by, helter-skelter, on its way to Ninety-third Street;

and as it died off into the distance, a comparative quiet ensued. Faintly up the stairs of the apartment-house came a rich baritone, singing softly:

“I knew, my first love,
There’d be but one house between you and me,
And I knew it would find
Yourself coaxing my child on your knee.”

The old Irish love-song came throbbing through the door, now rich and low, now tender and high, now rippling into a current of grace-notes. The old lady smiled with an expansion of muscles that gave the impression of sudden light. The judge grimaced.

“Over the tide
Sure I leaped with the leap of a swan—”

“That’s John!” the mother said. “I’ll see if his dinner’s ready.”

The door opened noisily, and the verse ended in a swinging note of triumph:

“Till I came to the side
Of the Wife of the Red-haired Man.”

He stood in the door for an instant, a careless smile about his mouth: six feet if an inch; two hundred pounds if an ounce; gray-eyed, full-faced; nose straight as a Greek’s, mouth small as a woman’s, and his dark-red hair rippling back from his forehead like water fanned by a wind. Then he strode across the room and kissed his mother.

“And how’s Mother Machree?” he asked.

“Oh, sure, I’m fine, John,” she answered, but there was a hint of nervousness in her tones. For the first time he seemed to become conscious of his brother’s presence. He straightened himself and looked his brother between the eyes.

"So you've been at it again!" All the bantering note had gone from his voice.

"I've been telling Mother some common-sense facts," the jurist answered with dignity. "My conscience—"

"Ah, you and your common-sense and your conscience!" John snapped disgustedly. "Let them trouble you yourself and don't come around bothering anybody else with them. You make me sick!"

The judge shrugged his shoulders and rose to go.

It has been thirty years now since Moyra Campbell came to New York, accompanying Peter Campbell, that roystering devil-may-care, red-haired husband of hers, who was good for nothing but roving. In those old days in Antrim they had called her the Star of Cushendun; and her father, old Joseph Taggart—canny, wealthy as farmers' wealth goes, fanatically religious—had planned for her a marriage which would have taken her out of her station and made her comfortable and respected, and envied too, for the rest of her life. A bishop's brother had seen her, a member of Parliament, and he was stricken by her looks as a man is stricken by fever; and perhaps, too, he was a little stricken by Taggart's strong-box.

"You to be in London," her father had said, drawing on his pipe and dreaming exultantly, "and to be talking to the great ones of the land—the dukes and barons and the nobles and peers. Oh, aye, and there's no vanity to it, for you'll be married to a bishop's brother. A great day for me to see; a great day, surely."

It seemed as if this were to be an assured thing, for the betrothal was carried out. But there was another factor to be considered, of which old James

Taggart was unaware, and that was Red Peter Campbell. There had been a few love-passages between her and the roystering ne'er-do-well of the barony, but they had been harmless, half sincere, such as had occurred between him and nearly every girl of Cushendun. One day Campbell would be at home, and the next he would be traveling off to Spain on some absurd mercantile venture, from which he would return laughing and penniless. Once he enlisted in the navy and nothing was heard of him for three years, and then he returned, laughing and red-haired as ever.

"But I never thought you were at all taken up with the sea, Peter," a neighbor ventured.

"Oh, it's not the sea I care for, but to be seeing the world, and not to be living here, the like of a rabbit in a hutch," he answered.

There were four things which puzzled the Psalmist, and one of them was the way of a man with a maid. And the enigma of Israel of old obtains today. For some impalpable reason the betrothal of Moyra Taggart fixed determination in Campbell's erratic soul, as a magnifying-glass will focus the rays of sunlight. He haunted her. He made love to her night and day. The end came on a moonlit night, returning from a dance in Cushendall.

"Oh, a great thing for you it'll be," he sneered, "to be over in London. A great thing, surely! The wee golden singing-bird of Cushendun in a wilderness of parrots! And the sun will rise, and the sun will go down, and one day will be as gray as another. And the bishop's brother will come in at night, and there'll be dry talk of politics and problems of High Church and of Low Church, maybe, instead of whispering of love, and great kissing!"

She was shaking in the moonlight now, and a little mist of tears had gathered in her eyes.

"But if you'd come with me," he went on, "it would not be the like of a prisoner in a house you'd be, but life before you, and your own share of it—the dancing or the crying, and the sorrow or the joy. And me always beside you, looking at those gray eyes of yours, that are like a spring day-breaking; or that black hair of yours, the like of a queen's cloak; or your warm white skin, like Chinese silk; or your slender hands—your wee, slender hands."

He put his arms about her shoulders and began crooning gently:

"'Tis what they say,
The little heel fits well in a shoe.
'Tis what they say,
The little mouth kisses well, too,
'Tis what they say,
My days are under mourning and ban,
Until love blooms in your heart
And you're the Wife of the Red-haired Man."

To the intense mortification of Joseph Taggart, farmer, of Cushendun, County Antrim, and to the red fury of James Ryan, Esquire, M.P., of London and Bangor, and to the disgust of a Right Reverend bishop, Moyra Taggart ran away with and married and went to America in the company of Peter Campbell, acknowledged by all as the most worthless and lovable wastrel in the whole North of Ireland. And her name was spoken in whispers and with a sort of shamed envy by the young women of the barony; and it was mentioned with disgust by the righteous of the neighborhood; and under her father's roof-tree it was not heard at all.

And for three years in America, Peter Campbell

prospered occasionally and more often did not. There were times, indeed, when a very real and frightening poverty laid its hand upon him. But through it all, with a great perverted conscientiousness, he caroused, sang, and enjoyed himself hugely.

"You ought to leave him, if he doesn't change his habits," came the eternal stereotyped advice from the eternal stereotyped meddler.

"Thank you very much," Moyra would reply with dignity, "but that is a matter between my man and myself." And within her she would think: "It's just the way of him, and if you'd change that you'd change everything."

But in those three years he loved her magnificently, and she him. And the poverty and the hardship and the coming of the two children when the purse was empty she looked upon as nothing compared with the great thing that lay between them. One touch of his hand, and a kiss, and all was forgotten. The dreary, dreary days were wiped from her memory as by magic when he would enter singing:

"There was the tree in the garden
Whose blossoms did tremble and shake.
I used to lay my hand on its bark,
And I'd think that my young heart would break.

"One thought alone
In my mind for a year had been rife—
One little kiss from her mouth,
Who is now the Red-haired Man's Wife!"

And then suddenly, in his carousals, in his joyous, careless, happy-go-lucky life, pneumonia stole up behind him and struck him between the shoulder-blades. And the great shoulders and barrel of chest and lithe, muscular arms grew stiff, and the genial

smile froze from his lips, and silence came over the golden voice of him, and he died.

About this time, too, died Joseph Taggart, Moyra's father, in Ireland; and with that spirit of fair play which, however cankered over, is at the hearts of all Northern Irish, he decided to include her in the division of his property. A very little came to her, something over a thousand dollars, but to the poor girl, grieved and broken-hearted, with two children—one not knee-high, the other still a little thing in a crib—it seemed like the functioning of Providence. With a decision of spirit that was nothing short of heroism, she started a little shop: tobacco and papers and other small things; and all the friends of Campbell—these were very many, for if her husband could not make money, he could always make friends—stood by her loyally. There was the one particular case of John Hanlon, who for years came twenty blocks to buy his pipes and papers and tobacco from Peter's widow.

Care has little chance to brood like a gray cloud on those whose hands are busy from morning until night. In her struggle for existence, with her two small children to tend also, she had little opportunity to sit and mourn her loss. It was just as well; for otherwise, poor girl! she would certainly have gone mad. But not for one instant did the picture of that mighty, careless figure of her husband leave her memory.

There is somehow in that strain of Celts who abide in the Scottish Highlands and people the eastern seaboard of Ulster, a sense of religion that amounts at times to a mania. A queer race of men and women, they, with the second sight among them! The next world is as close to them as the next town.

And now with Peter Campbell dead and the faint susurrus of his love-making hushed forever, there awoke in his wife Moyra that sense which she had always had, but which had been dulled for these years by the proximity of the intimate things of life. In that faith of hers—that terrible faith which the Covenanters had brought with fire and sword into the Scottish Highlands and the adjacent Irish coast—everything was stated with the exactitude of science. The line between venial and mortal offenses which merited hell-fire was drawn as firmly as a geometrical line. And when she remembered that rollicking, carousing husband of hers, her heart sank.

“There was no evil to him,” she would say to herself, “but, ah, the dear heart, the poor dear heart . . .” she would end incoherently. What she meant was that Peter Campbell, though his heart was as clean of evil as a swan’s down of black, did none of those things which merit grace. A roysterer, a singer, a lover, thinking as little of breaking a man’s head off as of filling his pipe. She trembled for what he might suffer. “Every idle word that man shall speak,” went the terrible dogma, “he shall render an accounting of on the Day of Judgment.” And oh, the idle words and the idle deeds and the idle singing for which the Red-haired Man might have to undergo suffering in the next world!

Her sons grew up: Patrick, the elder, ascetic, tall, given overmuch to studies; John, the younger, rollicking, red-haired, like his father—“The living image of his dad, God rest him!” an old crony said. “I’d know him out of Peter Campbell in a crowd of ten thousand men!” The small business prospered to such extent that both of them received the best schooling they possibly could. The schooling was not much use to the younger; at sixteen he had entered

a foundry with the intention of becoming an engineer. But one day a tutor had come from the school and told her that Patrick, he believed, had the makings of a great lawyer in him. He would go far; as far as the judge's bench, certainly; as far as the mayor's seat; as far, perhaps, as the White House.

"The poor soul outside in the winds of space!" she thought with that queer superstition of hers. "Sure, the One on high will not be hard on him, and the son He brought into the world preaching righteousness and administering justice, and an example to the land."

Time passed with those rapid, shuffling steps that are like a thief's, and John went his way through the world, burly, red-haired, laughing, like his father; or stayed at home, treating her with that warm affection that was more like a lover's than a son's, singing to her the songs his father loved, and recalling in every step, in every movement, in every smile, Peter Campbell of Antrim, who was known as the Red-haired Man. Something tugged at her heartstrings every time she saw John, and a great warmth went from her to him, like the warmth of a turf-fire.

But a certain awe which increased with the years grew up in her before Patrick the lawyer. He seemed to live on a plane apart; sifting the wheat and chaff of evidence; rendering decisions; terrible, unearthly as the blind goddess of the sword and scales. An awe, a reverence, would come over her as she saw him, robed in black, walk up to the judge's bench.

"His Honor the Court!" the attendant's voice would ring out like an acolyte's at a religious festival, and the massed throng would rise, an intangible feeling of dread sweeping through the ranks.

There would be a quick nod to the prosecutor,

and the machinery of the law which ground inexorably would start with ominous rattle. Calm, unruffled, apart, she would watch her son as he sat there weighing and judging.

"The case for the People rests!"

The snapping mongrels who protect the guerrillas of the world would then begin their tortuous explanations, their devious, shifting, tricky defense. The gray eye of her son would probe through their evasions like a lancet through the gangrene of wounds. Strong, like a tower, he stood between these and society, protecting it like an armed guard.

"Have you anything to say for yourself?" he would demand of the prisoner, his gray eyes piercing, his face set in a mask. At that instant he appeared like the ghostly judge who, her Irish legends told her, sits at the head of every dead man and asks the naked soul for its accounting of life. Ah, poor Peter Campbell! What had he to say for himself, who loved only the sweet companionship of friends, the lighted bars, the tussle of the football field, the love-making in the evenings? Ah, poor Peter Campbell!

"Life has no use for such as you," Judge Campbell once told an old cracksman in sentencing him.

"The hard struggle of righteousness you took no accounting of. You pampered yourself. You did what you pleased. In the end you stand charged with manslaughter. The killing of this policeman was an incident. Your real crime has been your outlook—your selfish outlook, the pampering of yourself. You are of no use to the world. I cannot sentence you to death, but I can and hereby do sentence you to prison for the rest of your natural days."

Every day of these years, every moment, nearly, her awe of and obedience to her son became a work

of grace. At his request she gave up the little store where she had worked so happily, where her hands were busy and her mind occupied.

"What did you do that for?" John had asked her on his return from taking a freighter to Norway and back.

"It wasn't nice for Patrick," she explained pathetically. "I don't think he liked it."

Something that sounded suspiciously like "Damn Patrick!" exploded from his brother's lips, but she let it pass.

There were also one or two occasions when, utterly against her feeling, on Patrick's advice, she had let John get out of some nasty scrapes by himself, where she could have helped him with money. There was also a sort of feeling in her mind that Patrick would not care to have his father's picture in the sitting-room; so she removed it to her own little bedroom. And now, at his representations, she was leaving this little home of hers, a home sanctified by years of abode, where every little trifle, every rent in the carpet, every minute stain on the wall testified to cherished inhabitation. She was leaving this, to live in a bare, austere room, surrounded by cold paid attendants.

"A hard thing!" She nearly wept. "A hard thing, surely!"

But she never questioned his decision, or the wisdom of his advice. To her he had become somehow the avenging angel of God, a viceregent of Providence, as infallible in his own way as the Goddess of Justice herself. And obediently she submitted to his decrees, believing by some queer mental process that this submission would earn grace for the spirit of her husband, the husband of her who had been the Wife of the Red-haired Man.

For days now, the loading of the great munitions freighter had been going on in a fever of hustle. Derricks whined and clanged and chattered with a rattling of chains. Up the gangways the huge lumbering longshoremen trundled their laden barrows with the precision of automata, just so much distance between them, just so many seconds to accomplish a given route, unload, and return. Past the pier, beyond the bows of the gray behemoth, the sunlit harbor was alive with craft as a hummock might be with ants. Behind them the brown dinginess of Brooklyn Heights slumbered as an ancient gray house-dog might slumber, dying slowly in the sun.

In the bows Jones, the burly, hairy, red-faced mate from Cardiff, was superintending the stowage.

"Hurry, you knock-kneed, lousy land-crabs, hurry!" he was bawling with that megaphone voice of his. "You diseased, consumptive runts, you're as slow as the grace of God at a hangman's funeral." He fixed his eye on the big Spaniard at the forward derrick. "Stand by faster at that derrick, you warp-hooved, spiggotty alley-rabbit! Do you hear me? Blast you! Do you hear?"

On the dock Campbell, efficient, unflurried, was overseeing the work with the calm strategy of a field-marshal. Because he had the knack of getting the most out of workmen, and because they obeyed him unquestioningly and stood by him loyally, the big steel firm, now feverishly turning out munitions, had detailed him as their pier-superintendent.

"Come, men, make it snappy!" was all he needed to say, but it accomplished more than the frenzied jeremiads of the Welsh mate.

The mate leaned over the port bow.

"Hi! You red-headed Mick!" he shouted at Campbell.

Campbell swung around as if struck in the face.

"Do you hear me?" the mate began bawling. "Ease off rushing that stuff up. What do you think you're doing, rushing for beer to one of your Irish saloons? You greasy mechanic!"

The pier-superintendent raised his hand. The hurrying longshoremen stopped dead in their shuffling rush. The derricks ceased whining. A dramatic silence fell over the dock. Campbell walked forward until he was directly under the mate.

"I've just had about enough of this from you," he said quietly.

The mate opened his mouth to bawl again, caught the look in Campbell's eye, hesitated, left his lips open, closed them again.

"Another word from you," Campbell went on, "just one word, and I'll kill you. Mark me! I'll murder you in cold blood!"

The mate's face turned slowly from beefy red to ashen gray. He left the rail and walked to the starboard side. A man laughed contemptuously somewhere, and another followed. The mate's face flushed to a shamed scarlet.

"Go ahead!" Campbell directed. And again, as by magic, was the quick shuffle of the longshoremen, the whine and clatter of the derricks, the fever of activity; but the bawling voice of the mate was silent, as though some deep-toned instrument had suddenly ceased playing in an orchestra.

The feud between Campbell and the mate had been of standing since the freighter had arrived in port. On the first evening Campbell had met the officer in Montagu Street, a little the worse off for liquor. The seaman was walking behind a thin, white-faced little girl—a stenographer perhaps, and delayed on her way home from work. He could hear

the mate's raucous voice attune itself ingratiatingly.

"Don't be so stand-offish, dearie. Can't you say a word to me?"

The mate had laid his hand on the girl's flinching shoulder. Simultaneously Campbell's grip had caught him on the collar. The mate had been whirled around. The little stenographer had fled down a by-street.

"You miserable hound!" Campbell had growled at him. "For two pins I'd bash your face in." But he'd contented himself with contemptuously throwing the man away from him, and walked on.

A few days later at the foot of the gangway the officer had bumped into him with set purpose. A quick trip of the young superintendent's foot, and the mate was sprawling along the dock. With mock apprehension he had assisted the man to his feet and had insisted on dusting off his uniform.

"Now, isn't it a shame," he had bantered, "the way they put things where a man can trip over them! And your nice blue uniform all dusty, too! It's criminal. That's what it is!"

The sailors and the stevedores had not seen the bump, but they had seen the tripping and heard the banter. The mate was in no way a popular figure among them; so their laughter had been loud and merry. And in Evans's red-rimmed eyes as he walked away, had been the look of a sullen, angered, vicious dog.

"The man's a bully and a coward," was Campbell's contemptuous assay of him.

The day's work had been finished, and the long-shoremen and sailors had knocked off. The variegated lights of the river dotted the harbor like quaint flowers, red and green and white, scattered about pell-mell, with here and there a ferry-boat's

linear illuminations like a gardener's fancy on a green lawn. Overhead the October stars seemed to crackle like fireworks. Campbell jumped off the car and made his way across Park Place to the Sixth Avenue Elevated. At Broadway he put his hand in his pocket for his watch.

"Might have time to take the old lady to a theater," he thought.

His watch was not there. With a groan of disgust he remembered he must have left it on shipboard. The squat Newcastle captain was passing a week's holiday with his wife and children in Virginia; so Campbell was using his cabin to clean up in after the day's grime. It was there he must have left it.

"Got to go back," he decided. The watch, an ornate gold one, was a present from his mother on the occasion of his first billet as a marine engineer. He would rather lose an eye than lose that watch.

"All those wharf-rats they're making sailors of now!" he muttered. Across the bridge he went again, and down Columbia Street. He passed the armed guards at the pier gate and flew up the gangway. In the violet glare of the dark arc-lamps he could see the night watchman talking to the sentry. He looked about the ship for sign of an anchor watch. The ship was deserted.

"Lazy sons of guns!" he muttered.

He nipped up to the boat-deck, and as he passed from port to starboard, he noticed a light in the mate's cabin. He passed it by and turned into the captain's. He switched the light up in the bathroom. Yes, his watch was there. He put it into his pocket and turned to go.

"Oh, Holland is a wondrous place, and
In it grows much green,

A wild inhabitation for
My young love to be in,"

he caroled.

He slammed the door noisily, and as he went out on deck the sight of New York alight held him for an instant. There was the long line of wharf-lamps, like strange blue flowers. There was the mysterious green of a shipping-office. Here the Singer Building rose up like some Gothic cathedral. There the morgue-like dome of the "World" Building showed strange and squat, and beside it rose the magnificence of the Woolworth edifice, like the palace Aladdin builded by the aid of the jinn for the King of China's daughter.

"There the sugar-cane grows plentiful
And fruit on every tree,"

he continued gently. He leaned over the rail.

Something warned him swiftly, with the sudden rapidity of a wireless-flash, that danger was about. He dropped on his knees like a wrestler ducking. Something swished viciously overhead. He pivoted on his hands and knees and stood up. Before him the mate stood futilely, a heavy monkey-wrench in his hand. In the half-gloom the officer's face was set in livid hate, and now there came an admixture of pallid fear.

Campbell swore through his teeth. His left fist shot out like a bullet to Evans's temple. His right hooked over to the jaw like a hammer. There was a faint splash as the wrench dropped overboard. There was a dull, heavy one as the mate crashed over the rail and followed the wrench.

For a minute Campbell stood glaring at the spot where the man had disappeared, his eyes flashing

mad anger, the muscles of his face twitching, his nostrils dilated. Then he became very white and trembling, and on his brow a cold perspiration broke out, as on the brow of a fevered man.

All night long, now, they had sat in the tiny living-room of the Columbus Avenue apartment. Dawn was breaking gently in the east, and the light of a new day was creeping into the room with a gray, metallic sheen that suggested tin. The light of the gas was turning to a faint, sickly yellow. Life was returning to the city in faint, spasmodic leaps; the pattering of feet on the pavement, the more rapid whirl and gallop of the train, the clatter of carts over the stones, hoarse voices raised occasionally on the sidewalks.

But the man and the woman in the room were not paying any attention to these things. Campbell was sitting with his head between his hands, his face cut into lines as by a sculptor's chisel and hammer. His mother sat upright, her hands clasped loosely in her lap, on her face the unquestioning bravery that had carried her through poverty and desolation and suffering and had brought her, seemingly, until now, into a safe anchorage where she might await tranquilly the Pilot who would bring her over the last mysterious bar to the golden harbor of souls.

For the twentieth time they were reviewing the accident.

"If only the wrench hadn't fallen overboard!" she sighed.

"I dived for it, after I dived for him, but there was no chance. The mud at the pier is ten foot deep, and soft. There would be no chance."

"No chance," she repeated dully.

"I slipped over the side . . ." He repeated the story for the fifteenth time. It was as though the whole thing had become unreality to him and he were telling the story to himself insistently, to convince himself it was true. "I slipped over the side from the saloon-deck and dived about for him, but the tide was running out, and the undertow must have caught him." A dull, insistent monotony crept into his voice. "The watchman was looking around to find out what the splash was. I told him it was me; I had tripped and fallen overboard. They'll kill me for it. They'll send me to the chair. Oh, Mammy! They'll send me to the chair!"

"But dear, they can't!" she insisted, though in her eyes there was terror.

"But they can, Mammy dear! Look! Every one knew there was blood between us. They heard me say I would murder him, even though I meant nothing. They saw me trip him up. They'll find the body and they'll know I was on the boat when he disappeared. There's no chance!"

"But they can't! But they can't!"

"There's a Kerr Line boat leaving for the Plata to-day, and McMinstry's the chief. I'll tell him all about it, and he'll see me through to Buenos Aires. That's what I'll do; Mammy dear, if we only could go off together, and start somewhere again!"

"Have you got any money, dear?" she asked him.

"I've got a hundred," he said. "I haven't been saving much," he added with a sort of shamed apology.

"And why should you be saving?" she asked. She smiled a little to herself. "Don't worry about that."

She rose and looked at the gray dawn coming in. Her eyes rested on the clock. It was five now.

"You'd better have a bit to eat," she suggested. "Just a wee bite." He shook his head.

"I'll be going out for a few minutes," she told him. "Don't worry, Johnny. Will you be all right here until I come back?"

She slipped down Amsterdam Avenue quickly. She knew Patrick would be up at half-past six and that she could catch him before he went down to the courts. Between them, she knew, they could save John—save him, she felt with a touch of horror, from another dawn such as this when the dreadful side door of a prison would open and the terrible procession would start for the terrible chair. She panted slightly as she walked to the elevated. A little mist gathered in her eyes as she heard the robins twitter amid the ivy of a church. To think that birds should sing on such a day as this!

She got off at Fifty-ninth Street and made her way toward Madison Avenue, where Patrick lived in bachelor quarters. Already he was up and at work with a secretary. The pale, keen, judicial face showed stern and uncompromising in the white light of the morning. He strode up and down the little sitting-room in dressing-gown and slippers, volleying directions to the secretary.

"See that an editorial is written on the vice case in the afternoon papers. I'll give the man the limit. It'll produce a good impression for the city administration. . . . There's the case of Olsen—ten years. And those two boys to Elmira—"

"But the number of letters asking for parole . . ." the secretary suggested.

"I'll take no chances. I'll send them up."

He turned around to his mother with a look of

impatience. He caught the tense look on her face, and sent the secretary away.

"Patrick," she faltered out, "John has killed a man."

For a few instants he was silent. His face hardened.

"I knew it," he said bitterly.

"You knew it?"

"I knew something like this would happen one day or another."

She told him of every detail of the occurrence. He listened non-committally.

"We must get the boy out of the country, Patrick," she finished. "We must get him away."

"No!" The judge's teeth clicked. His mouth set hard. "He must give himself up to the police. He must make a clean breast of it."

"But, Patrick, it was an accident."

"He must give himself up."

"They will kill him, Patrick. There's no evidence to help him. Oh, Patrick! My son, your brother—"

"The law permits of no injustice," the judge said.

"And if a man kill a man, he must suffer."

"Patrick!"

"I've got to see the city chamberlain before court on a campaign matter, and I've got some very important things at court. But I'll adjourn early. At two o'clock I'll be at the house, and John and I will go down together, and he will give himself up."

"Patrick!" she pleaded. His answer came harshly, like the cut of a whip.

"No!"

She turned without a word and left the room. The secretary went back. As she stood by the elevator waiting for it to come up, she could still hear Patrick's quick, incisive tones: ". . . a record of con-

victions in which the administration may well take pride."

She went home in a daze, trembling, shaking with a horrible fear. As she climbed up the steps of the apartment-house, she stopped two or three times and let queer little sobs escape her. At the door of the flat, she paused to compose her features. She walked in. John was packing things into a grip.

"My poor boy!" she said. She put her hand up to his waving chestnut hair and stroked it. "My poor boy, you'll have to give yourself up."

He looked at her with an amazed horror in his eyes.

"Patrick says—" she began.

"You told Patrick!" His eyes grew wider and more terror-stricken. "You told Patrick!" He became suddenly very white. He retreated until he was against the wall. "Ah, Mammy!" came from his lips in a shuddering moan. "Ah, Mammy! I'm a dead man!"

He walked along, a forbidding figure in judicial black, with a quick, rapid step. His face had hardened to the consistency of granite. He turned out of Central Park West into a side street. He swung into Columbus Avenue. At the door of the apartment-house he nearly collided with his mother. She was coming from the direction of Broadway, where the subway is.

"Come, Mother, we've got no time," he told her in that decisive voice of his. "John and I will go right down, and then I'm coming back to bring you over to Staten Island. I'll take care of everything."

She stood straight before him without an effort to move. In her face was a decision equal to his own.

"You'll not be taking John down," she said, "for

John left the country two hours ago. I helped him to do it, and I saw him off."

He was looking at her as though he didn't understand.

"And you'll be taking me to no Home, for John is going to buy a home for us where he'll be. And I'll follow him when it's safe; and my place will be with him night and day."

The judge's white face grew purple with anger.

"How dared you?" he exploded. "How dared you?"

She moved closer to him and looked him fixedly in the eyes. There was somehow a great spirit of dignity about her that abashed him.

"You may be a minister of justice," she said quietly, "but you're a son of mine, and I'll hear no words like that from you." She turned and left him and walked up the stairs.

She passed through the little parlor to her bedroom, and as she sat down weakly in her chair a queer uneasiness and a queer terror came over her. She felt now that the break with this son of hers, and her disobedience toward him who was an agent of righteousness, might withdraw grace from him who was already awaiting the Day of Judgment. It seemed to her somehow that the consequences of the break would recoil on this poor prisoner in a ghostly jail. She sang quaveringly:

"For years I have lain
In a prison shackled and bound—
Bolts on my arms,
And a thousand locks frowning around."

She raised her eyes, that were tear-drenched now, to the faded crayon portrait on the wall, as though to

implore forgiveness. She gave a quick start and half rose in her chair. It may have been the fancy of a woman who was growing old and lonely, or it may have been the excitement and the strain of the night that were telling on her, but it appeared to her that the dim picture was aglow with glory. And somehow they seemed spirit arms that were once great bars of sinew and muscles; and that to her heart, voiceless, a voice was speaking that had once whispered to her from the fall of evening to the dawn of day. And it was telling her that she had done right and well.

“But over the tide,” she faltered, “but over the tide . . .”

She rose in the chair with a mighty exaltation in her face, and all at once the beloved song came from her lips, full, resonant, exultant:

“But over the tide
He leaped with the leap of a swan,
Till he stood by the side
Of the Wife of the Red-haired Man!”

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