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COOK BY WIRE

over about dad, my dad, you know, and all the brave stories he used to tell me when he was alive. And Peter was to be a soldier, too, when he grew up, a British soldier. I used to put him through his drill. He had a little rifle and a sword. I taught him the 'British Grenadiers,' he could sing it all through without a mistake, and he would put his soldiers on the floor in the nursery in marching order, and then he would walk up and down before them and sing it at the top of his little lungs. Then one day—"she paused a moment and shut her eyes tightly before she went on, "one day word came that England had declared war. A dreadful thing happened, dreadful to Peter and me. All of the soldiers, the forts, the guns were stamped upon and broken, and—and the Union Jack that hung over Peter's crib was taken down and burnt, and—and—"her voice rose a little. "Peter and I were forbidden ever to speak of British soldiers again. I was forbidden to mention my father's name. I was told I must make Peter forget he had any British blood in his veins, and Peter was whipped for singing the 'British Grenadiers.' And he was to know nothing of the war, nothing. That is why he always plays alone—that is why we never speak of what, next to Peter, is nearest my heart, I was forced to promise—to promise—until—I should be released from my promise."

"It—it—it was your husband, I suppose?" Philip asked.

"It was my husband," her voice dropped, and she hung her head.

"B-B-B Jove!" stammered Philip, "I didn't know there were any Americans—"

SHE interrupted him. "My husband is not an American," she said, not looking at him. "He belonged to the reserve, and when the war broke out he went almost immediately to join his regiment. His name is Hofman. He is a Prussian officer."

Philip never knew quite how he said good-bye, and got away. Their parting was very brief. He could not see her face distinctly in the waning light, and her hand was cold in his. He tried to give her some message for Peter, that he would not see him again, but that he would write him a letter, that was all he dared to say. When the last throb of his motor had been hushed by the distance, the woman sat down in the chair where he had sat, and taking the box of Lancers in her lap she kissed the little soldier men, one by one, before she wrapped them up carefully and laid them away.

Of course, Ferris could not sleep when he reached his hotel. He did not ever try. Over and over he lived through the amazing events of the day. Over and over Peter's little face and Peter's mother's face came before his eyes. Over and over he heard her voice, laughing, in abandon at some sally of Peter's, or whispering pitifully her sad confidences. At first Philip thought he must see her again. He made up his mind that he would go out the next day. Their parting had been unspeakably cruel. He asked himself savagely why he had not taken the poor little broken thing in his arms and comforted her? He had been a silly conventional fool. Very well, to-morrow he would go back. He would be different. He would be as he wanted to be. He imagined it.

He trembled to imagine it. Then he thought of Peter, dear, odd, lovable little Peter. He wanted passionately to see Peter again—to hold him on his knee, to put his cheek on Peter's curly head. Just once he would like to hold them both, Peter and Peter's mother in his arms together. They were his. She had said so. They were his. He wanted them, he needed them. He closed his eyes, he smelled the lilac, and heard the hum of the bees. Hot tears trickled down his cheeks.

NO, he couldn't go. He knew he could not go. He knew he must do the hard square thing and never see either of them again. It was as well he had made up his mind to leave the next day. Perhaps, when he had got a safe distance away, in France somewhere, on the eve of his next engagement, he would write to her, and let her know that he loved her, that he hoped to God—

Towards morning Ferris remembered the letter that he had promised to deliver. He must try and deliver it or see that it was delivered. He pulled his bag from under the bed and opened his dispatch box. He had not had the letter out since he left France, now he drew it from among some others and took it over to the light. The writing was irregular and faintly traced.

Philip held it close to his eyes. Then—!

He gave a start, an exclamation. The name! What was it?

"Mrs. Alvo Hofman, Hillside Place." He took off his glasses, rubbed them and put them on again, and read the address a second time.

"No," said Ferris aloud. "It isn't true. I need sleep." He put the letter down. He was afraid his nerves were giving away and he was beginning to suffer from a recurrence of the hallucinations which had bothered him the first few weeks after he had been wounded.

He undressed and put on his pyjamas, then, impelled irresistibly, he went to the dressing table and looked once more at the superscription on the envelope. Unless his overwrought nerves were deceiving him the name was that which he had first read. "I will try and sleep," said Ferris. He tucked the letter under his pillow. To his own amazement four hours later he found he had been asleep. He drew the letter out and read the address again. This time he knew it could not be a mistake. It was a working of that same wonderful Fate that Mirry had such faith in. It was too amazing to be true, but it was true, nevertheless. The letter was from Miriel's husband and Miriel's husband had died in his arms five months before.

Ferris spent all the morning in writing a letter to Miriel in which he enclosed that of her husband.

"I am writing to you," he said, "because I want to give you time to adjust yourself to the new order of things before I see you, and because I am such a duffer at explaining. It happened in an advance. We had taken a German trench, and my men had gone on. I could not, because I had been hit. I was waiting for the stretcher bearers, along with some other chaps when I heard a man calling out from around a turn in the trench. I could walk a bit and presently I found him. He had been wounded badly. I did what I could

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