

sadness. Somehow this room, so sheltered from the same world he had wandered over; this woman, who for the moment seemed to embody all that he had come to learn the wide world wagged for: this deep heart feeling just beyond his reach, made him uneasy. In Cuba, with Roosevelt, he had seen the bravest men fight for love of women; in Venezuela he had heard dying men whisper a woman's name; in South Africa he had heard men lying on the hillside talk with their last few allotted words, not of ambition, not of patriotism, nor of God, but just of some Kate, some Nell some Gretchen. If he were to be shot down what name could he summon to help him die with a smile; the senorita who had brought him tobacco in Cuba? the full-eyed Boer lass with whom he had passed a day within the lines at Johannesburg? Bah! it was not such names dying men uttered.

"God ha' mercy on such as we!"

He had swung round on the piano-stool and now sat bending forward, elbows on knees, gazing into the fire as he had done so many times in camp. She stole to a hassock in a shadow to the left of the flames where she might watch his face and he might not see the maidenly glow in hers.

"I thought you—you were very happy, Paul!"

The pathos in her voice startled him.

"Why, I am not so unhappy, girlie," he answered, rousing himself. "But I should not have sung you 'Gentlemen Rankers.' That song has germs in it and produces a disease like the fever, and then a fellow talks nonsense. That awful feeling isn't homesickness—it's something deeper. Homesickness takes you by the hand and looks into your eyes and makes you want to cry like a kid; but the other takes you by the throat and glares at you until you want to drop dead. I struck a town once in South Africa and didn't know a soul. After supper I went out to walk, 'cause there wasn't any one to talk with and I passed hundreds of people who just stared. I sat down in a cafe, but every one about me was talking a jargon, and I sat on like one of the empty chairs. Then I wandered out into the country a bit. It had grown

dark, and through the open window of a little house with a garden in front of it, I saw an old burger and his wife and children sitting about a table. There was a little lamp there with a red shade—a little lamp with a red shade." He stopped abruptly. Then he laughed the hollow mockery of a laugh.

"It wasn't homesickness that made me sit there by the roadside and watch that lamp until they put it out. It wasn't homesickness, because I have no home."

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"I mean that this cursed 'Wanderlust' has stolen my home! I have a home, a mother and sisters—but it isn't a home, may God be good to them! It isn't strong enough to keep me there. Helen! why did you lead me to talk of this?"

It was a strong man's cry.

"We will not talk of it more," she said quietly. "You have not asked me what I have been doing all these long months."

"I know. I heard it. You are going to be married and—"

"No, I am not to be married. I do not think I'm to be married," she added.

She saw him lean forward a little with a quick start.

"It was of Bob you heard?"

"Yes, Bob."

"I like him" she went on with the frankness of a sister to her brother. "He is a good man."

"One of God's own," he broke in. She did not catch the touch of bitterness in his voice, and so it hurt, and she smoothed back the hair from her white forehead.

"He wishes me to marry him in June. I have told him three times that—that I do not wish to marry him. The last time I promised to give him an answer—why, it's to-morrow I am to answer him! Can you tell me Paul, why I do not love him?"

He had known this man Bob since childhood—this man who now had the reputation of being the most promising young physician in the city—and he knew him to be a strong and upright man.

A mischievous flame leaped out far enough to unveil her face and to reveal her leaning forward with eyes as bright as the embers. And he was looking at her.