

"Although nothing like so big as I am," claimed a voice.

"Gilda was a capable nurse, I believe, and much beloved by all the men she tended," resumed the Flanders drop. "But she was reckless, and somewhat impatient of discipline. I don't know whether she had any right to be in that village," said the drop musingly. "I rather think she ought not to have been there, far up in the danger zone; but the officers were not anticipating any immediate advance of the enemy; and she declared she couldn't leave her boys. Some badly wounded soldiers, many of them older than herself, she called her boys. It is impossible to understand these mortals.

"The troops had fallen back, but the Sister refused to go with them. Being hidden in a cellar, with the wounded men, she had been overlooked by the officer in command; in any case, she would have disobeyed his order. The disabled men were being carried back as quickly as possible, but there was a good deal of confusion, and not a sufficient number upon the spot to cope with the difficulties. A warm mist spread along the ground. I was going up in vapour at the time, therefore could see plainly all that happened.

"The Sister had left her cellar; she was running towards No Man's Land, as they called the space between the armies; and presently she saw a stretcher-bearer on his knees and praying. He was just an ordinary man to her; and in his emotional and frightened state she appeared to him as a visitor from another world.

"'An officer lies out there wounded, a friend of mine; we must bring him in,' she cried.

"'My comrade has been killed. It is death to go out there,' Ernest told her.

"'Come,' she said, in her commanding way. 'I will help you.'

"They raised the stretcher; I watched them staggering through the mist. They came to a young officer, dragging himself along the ground, for he had been shot in the legs; and he ordered the Sister to go back; but she laughed at the boy and shook her head. Ernest was stupefied; he went with his new comrade because he did not know how to refuse, but I think he scarcely knew what he was doing. He spoke aloud continually, some-