COMMITTED TO THE DEEP

The steward knocked, and put his head in at the door.

"Cabin passenger, sir, No. 16," he reported, with a business-like brevity. "Very bad."

Dr. Yalden glanced up from his desk irritably.

"What's the matter with him?"

"Dun'no, sir. Uncommon bad."

"Usual thing, I suppose?"

"No, sir. Not sea-sick. Queer when he come aboard yesterday, I thought. Been in bed all day. Wouldn't let me get him anything—till just now he asked me to fetch you."

"No. 16, you say? All right."

The steward withdrew, and the doctor only delayed to finish the first paragraph of a letter he had been writing when he was interrupted.

It was not exactly an urgent letter, for he had no intention of doing anything with it until the ship arrived at Liverpool; but it was a letter that required a deal of consideration, and, though he was not in most things phlegmatic, he was impatient to have it all ready to post immediately he landed, for it was to contain much that he knew he could not possibly put into speech, and it was to tell the recipient that he would arrive less than half a day behind it.

The lamp that shone from the wall of No. 16 showed him a haggard man stretched on a bunk apparently asleep.

He was a youngish man—not much over thirty, anyway. His features were gaunt and tanned with hard living and rough weather, and his hands were coarsened as with manual employments. He slept uneasily, and his breathing was stentorious and difficult.

While the doctor was taking this preliminary survey of him, he coughed and awoke.

"Steward!"

"I'm the doctor. You sent for me. What's wrong?"

"Oh, thanks. I don't know, doctor. I've felt awfully knocked up for day past, and thought I could throw it off—but I can't. My head's all afire, and my hands, too. Feel that."

The doctor took his hand and laid a finger on his pulse. The hand was hot and dry, the pulse was galloping furiously, and a brief examination was sufficient to diagnose his ailment.

"A touch of pneumonia," said Yalden. "You must take more care of yourself than you've been doing lately. You were not fit to travel; you must have felt it before you started."

"I wanted to get home," the other answered wearily. "I've been away—a long time."

"We must see what we can arrange about nursing," the doctor concluded. "I'll give you some medicine; you've got a good constitution, and, with care, you'll pull round all right."

"Think so?"

"Oh, yes. * * * He mustn't be left, Barrow." The doctor turned to the steward. "Somebody will have to sit up with him to-night. I'll see him again before I turn in; and I'll get the captain to let you have assistance."

After fulfilling the latter duty he retired to his cabin, and resumed the laborious composition of his letter.

A glimpse of what he was writing would have amazed any man who knew him. For to everybody who knew him, with one possible exception, Dr. Yalden was a matter-of-fact, wholly unromantic man of nearer fifty than forty; whereas the letter that was slowly developing under his pen might almost have been written by a sentimental boy in the agonies of first love. Nobody would have credited the doctor with possessing a sentimental streak anywhere in his robust person. He never suspected it himself even until three years ago.

Three years ago he met in London the girl he told himself he had been looking for all his life. Her people had been rich and proud, and now, through recent financial disasters, they were poor and prouder, but what did that matter? He loved her, and cared for nothing else if she could only love him.

He had told her so. She heard him with pity in her eyes; and she told him that the man she loved was dead and her heart was buried with him.

Later, he heard the story that lay behind her words, and saw more hope in it himself than she had given him, for surely his living love of her could in time win her away from the memory of a dead rival.

He was speeding homeward now, and the letter was to prepare her for his coming. He wrote it with so many pauses of reflection that by 10 o'clock it was still unfinished, when, mindful of his patient, he relocked it in his desk.

No. 16 was awake, but drowsy with sheer weakness.

"The chest's still troublesome," he answered, with feeble cheerfulness, "but I'm a trifle better, thanks."

The doctor was not so sure of that. "We've got to keep your strength up somehow," he said.

"If I don't pull through this—"

"Don't worry about that; you will."

"But if I don't—I'm not afraid of dying. I've been near it too often for that; and yet, now, it seems harder than ever it did before."

"You'd better not talk. I don't want you to excite yourself."

"Not me! What I mean is, it would be hard luck for me to die on the way home. I went away as poor as a rat, and I'm going back rich. I didn't get out just because I got the gold fever. It's out to Klondike I've been; away beyond Dawson City—Lord! it's the kind of country you see in nightmares."

"Don't think of it."

"I wish I couldn't. I haven't had time to think of it till now."

He went on talking, and Yalden listened absently, with strange doubts troubling his mind.

"And I'm not dead yet, though I'm supposed to be," the other chuckled grimly. "One everlasting, terrible winter we were snowed up miles away from anywhere, and we were put down as done for. The wonder is that we were not. Only two of us managed to worry through, and we wandered, Heaven only knows where, and we lived—well, we didn't live. But we worried through—and I'm going home." His eyes closed, and he wandered on dreamily: "Nine years! but she'll be waiting. I told her that it wouldn't be more than two—and she said: 'It's till you come, Ned; and if you never come, I shall wait till I meet you, at the end.'"

He lay quiet a minute, and then opened his eyes, and finding the doctor regarding him intently, he continued:

"We've never written to each other. We promised her people we wouldn't. She was to be free to change her mind if she would; they said it was best. I had no money and no prospects, but if I went back a rich man and she had not changed. * * * I knew she never would. Whether I lived or died, she said she would never change—and she won't."

"Did you say your name was Edwin Ashton?"

The doctor was startled by the alien sound of his own voice.

The sick man nodded, and pointing across the cabin—

"Her portrait's in my bag, doctor," he said. "Do you mind getting it for me? My will's there, too. I made it as soon as I struck my first lucky case * * * Oh, what I wanted to ask you, doctor, was—if I don't pull round, will you have my bag and everything sent to her? You will find her address—"

"Yes, yes. But not now," Yalden interrupted, harshly. "You've talked too much already. * * * Come along, Barrow," he hailed the advent of the steward with ineffable relief. "Call me if he is worse in the night."

He was dazed and stupefied by the knowledge that had come upon him so unexpectedly, and yearned to be alone where he might think of it.

Yet he could not think of it even when he was alone, for every thought as it touched his brain flamed into madness and became an incoherent flicker that baffled him. One thought only burned to a clear and fiercely steady blaze—a sinister, hellish thought that he dared not face and could not extinguish.

"My God!" he muttered, pacing his cramped room like a caged animal. "It's more than I can bear."

He lost all count of time, as a man does when he sleeps, but when the steward summoned him hurriedly an hour after midnight he had evidently not been in bed; a light was burning in his cabin, he was still dressed, and his face was wan and his eyes heavy as if he were in pain.

"Mr. Ashton's worse, sir. Edwards is with him, and he called me to fetch you. He can't sleep. Keeps sitting up, Edwards says, staring as if he could see people. an' talking very singular. Delirious, I expect, sir."

"We must try a sleeping draught," said Yalden, dully. "I'll be there directly."

Barrow being gone, he busied himself in the medicine cupboard, and hastened after him, carrying something in a glass.

Drawing near to No. 16, he could hear the sick man babbling monotonously. and the very sound of his voice stung him and quickened that fire of hell to a fiercer flame within him; till suddenly he caught a word of what the man was saying—merely a name, but the utterance of it checked him instantly, as if a hand had plucked at his sleeve.

He stood trembling, and in that same instant saw, shaping white in the darkness before him, a sweet, sad face, grown pale with weary years of longing—the pure, wistful eyes looked into his and their calmness calmed him, and their sadness made him ashamed.

He was sad again; he could not go on, but yielded to the gentler impulses as readily as if the utterance of her name had conjured her there in very reality to turn him back, and he had regained his better self in her presence.

With something breaking like a sob in his throat, he swiftly retraced his steps, pausing in the unlightened saloon to open one of the portholes and fling the glass he carried far out into the dark.

Thereafter he sat till well into the day watching and tending the man she loved and had loved so long. He shrank from trusting himself alone with his own thoughts again; yet and because she loved him, and her happiness was bound up in his life, all that unhappy night he fought with death for the man he hated.

Going on deck in the morning, he leaned over the side to tear up the letter he had written and throw the fragments into the sea.

It was the burial of a great hope that had died in the night.

As he walked away, the captain, coming from breakfast, met him and lingered to make inquiries.

"Morning, doctor; how's the patient? You're not going to make a funeral of it, I hope?"

"Not quite." Yalden laughed, carelessly. "He has taken a turn for the better."

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A HERO IN SPITE OF HIMSELF

Lieut. Lloyd Griscom leaned low over his pony's neck and dug his spurs again into the tough little animal's rhinoceros hide until it finally broke into quite a hard gallop and dashed along the narrow trail on one side of the muddy road, while the mud spattered furiously into the face of Lieut. Griscom and the branches whipped long red ridges in his face. It was because of the galloping horses and the splashing mud and the thrashing of the branches that Lieut. Griscom groaned.

"Oh, Lord," he said, "how she'll guy me! I'll look like that stage lieutenant in 'Shenandoah,' after all. But I've got to ride; I've got to do it, but maybe she'll be gone back to Manila."

With this comforting thought Lieut. Griscom gave another jab with his spur at his pony's flank and ducked his head a little lower down as he recalledhe was coming to the dangerbend of the road where he had been warned to look out for Filipino sharp shooters.

He could not get out of his mind the last conversation he had had with Ethel Kingley in Manila. He had only been in the army a short time, having come out to the Philippines only a month before, after having secure a commission through family influence. The first evening he had spent in Manila he had met Ethel Kingley an army girl all through.

She had been born at an army post, and as she had had the good sense to select a colonel as her father, of course during her early life at the post she had been the pampereddaughter of the regiment and had grown up with more exaggerated ideals of "the service" than a major-general ought to have. She couldn't help laughing a bit at Lieut. Griscom. In fact, the newly-fledged lieutenant felt, soon after he met the girl that she regarded him as a fine joke on the army.

Whileshe knew well enough how he came to enter the army, she took particular pains to ask him if he were "a graduate." Of course Lieut. Griscom did not know that when anyone in the army asks you if you are "a graduate," the term refers only to West Point, so in his depth of ignorance he had answered—"Oh, yes, indeed—Daleville College, Daleville, Illinois." Then the army girl laughed. This annoyed Lieut. Griscom, and he informed her that the students at Daleville had a military company that Congressman Tuffs, from that district, had said drilled with as much precision as did the cadets at West Point.

This last statement was made so seriously that conversation lagged for a while until Miss Kingley could recover from a hysterical fit of laughing. She apologized for what she said must seem like rudeness. Lieut. Griscom admitted to himself that it had seemed much like rudeness. But Miss Kingley went on to say that she was perfectly sure that Lieut. Griscom would be a hero. Lieut. Griscom had grown red at this, but Miss Kingley went on to say that she was sure of it.

"You see, you've been in the volunteers and you're a C. L.—civil lifer, you know—and you can't help but be a hero. Regulars never can be heroes, Mr. Griscom, don't you know. They are just regulars, no matter what they do. But you can't escape being a hero. I expect sometime to be seated somewhere or other and suddenly to hear fierce foot-beats at a distance—you know, like they have on the stage—ratty tee rat, ratty tee rat, ratty tee rat. Then the horse will stop and you will come bursting into the room all covered with mud and with your face all marked up with briars and the like, and probably a handkerchief around your head, with the blood trickling down over your left ear. And you will stagger up to the general or whoever is commanding, and say: 'General, we are—sur—round — ed by the en—e—my,' in little gasps, you know, like that, 'and they have kil—led twen—ty of our men and will soon kill the rest unless help comes, and I have cut my way out and rode here to ask for re—in—forcements. Then, don't you know, the general will say, 'Well done, my brave boy—but you are wounded.' And you will try to straighten up, and then suddenly see me, and then you will flush and say, 'No, general, only a scratch,' and fall insensible on the stage—no, I mean on the floor—and the supernumeraries—Imean the soldiers—will carry you out. That 's the way they do in 'Shenandoah' and all those war plays where they have real heroes."

The new lieutenant had blushed deeply and fled from his tormentor as soon as possible, but the moth cannot stay away from the light, and neither could Lieut. Griscom remain long away from the light in the sweet brown eyes of Ethel Kingley, and he haunted her for the two weeks he remained in Manila. Then he had been sent to join his company at Bacoor some twenty miles south.

A few days after he had gone to Bacoor he was thrown into a transport of joy by finding that Ethel Kingley was coming down the next day with the colonel's wife for a few hours' visit. The next morning, however, he had been sent out with two companies on a reconnoitering expedition. At 10 o'clock the command walked into a Filipino ambush and there was hot work. Lieut. Griscom even surprised himself by his coolness and handled his men as easily under fire as though he had been used to that sort of thing all his life. But the Filipino force was large and well-officered and refused to be driven back. Finally, things commenced to look dubious for the little column, and the senior captain had called for a volunteer to make the attempt at riding back down the trail to Bacoor after re-enforcements. Griscom at once asked to be given the duty and a moment later he was riding like a whirlwind through a lot of whizzing, popping bullets on his way back for help. He got safely away and soon he had put several miles between himself and the Filipinos and commenced to think more slowly.

Then he commenced to think of what Ethel Kingley had said. Sure enough she would be sitting in the colonel's quarters and hear the hoofbeats of his horse. Well it wasn't a horse, it was only a pony, but that fact didn't mak any essential difference. Anyways he would dash in jus t as she had prophesied, all covered with mud and his face slashed with red streaks, and gasp, "Sir, we are sur—rounded." No; he resolved that in any event he wouldn't gasp. Anyways he wasn't wounded.

There was a crack from somewhere across the river. Even as he heard it he felt a pain through his breast. He groaned as his pony dashed on, but not from anguish. "Oh, I'm wounded," he thought; "that bushwhacker got me. Just as she said. O, what a stage figure I'll cut. What a guy I'll be. What a stage play I'll make." He had to grip his saddle horn sternly to keep from falling.

On and on he went and soon he saw the top of the church at Bacoor. An inspirationseized him as he entered the town. He called to a private soldier that was lounging in front of a fruit stand and borrowed his clean coat, for the front of his own had a deep stain from chin to belt. The soldier helped him from his horse and he bathed his face clean in the pool by the roadside. Then he combed his hair and put wet clay over the hole in his breast to stop the bleeding. Then he put on the clean coat and buttoned it and leaned on the arm of the soldier and walked slowly down the street towards the colonel's house and left his horse tied to a bamboo fence.

"Anyways," said Lieut. Griscom, "there's be no hoof-beats and no mud and no blood-streaked countenance and no red stain over my left ear."

Around the corner from the colonel's house he bade the soldier leave him him to go alone. The soldier stood staring after him as the lieutenant walked a little uncertainly down the street.

Griscom found it hard work walking up the steps to the colonel's quarters on the second floor. As he reached the landing he was aware that Miss Kingley was standing in front of him and that she was saying: "Why, Lieut. Griscom, what a disappointment. Is this the heroic sort of entrance that you make) Why, I'm quite disappointed in you. I was all ready to fasten a medal right there on your breast."

She gave the lieutenant a sharp little blow on his chest that almost made him wince. He was also afraid she had knocked some of the mud from his wound and started it bleeding again.

"What brought you back, Grimson?" asked the colonel. Griscom saluted the latter, assured the colonel's wife that there was no danger of attack, and then told the commanding officer that he would have to see him alone for a moment in regard to some of the guardhouse prisoners. The colonel and Grimson walked downstairs. They reached the outside of the house, and then Griscom told the story of the attack on the reconnoitering column.

"Griscom," said the colonel, "I'll send two guns and as many companies as I can spare at once, but I'm afraid there'll be an attack made on the town as soon as we send out a considerable force. You must take 20 men and escort the ladies back to Manila. Look out for an attack. Go as fast as you can, and don't let my wife be alarmed if you can help it. She's nervous and has just recovered from a long siege of fever, and the effect might be disastrous."

So the women were told that some important military moves were to be made while would require the garrison to quit Bacoor for a time, and they would have to return at once to Manila, and they were bundled off before they fairly had time to tell the colonel good-bye.

Griscom rode at the front of his little column. After a time Miss Kingley joined him.

"Why are you making us go so fast, Mr. Griscom?" she asked.

"O, these men are needed back at Bacoor, and we must hurry you into Manila as fast as possible, so that we can return."

"Does riding always make you so white, Lieut. Griscom?" asked Mis Kingley.

"Why, no," said Griscom. "No, that is, you see—"

Miss Kingley looked at him sharply. "I am afraid that I do see," she answered, shortly, and reigned her horse back to the side of the colonel's wife. That lady was deeply indignant at the pace Lieut. Griscom was setting, and called to him sharply several times to ride slower.

But Griscom did not turn around. That mud had been shaken out, and he realized that the front of his new coat was showing a sickly stain. So he merely answered over his shoulder and rode even faster.

Finally a sharp "Halt!" down the road told them that they had arrived safe at one of the outposts of Manila.

Griscom briefly told the man on picket to call the officer of the guard and when that individual arrived he gave the women into his charge.

"You're hurt," said the guard officer, as he placed his finger on the front of Griscom's coat.

"Nothing to speak of," answered Griscom, "don't talk so loud. The ladies are nervous."

He turned about and rode back to his squad and gave the order to march. He heard his name called and looked back over his shoulder. Miss Kingley was walking toward him.

"Won't you say good-bye?" she asked.

"Good-bye," he said. "Squad forward—"

"Mr. Griscom," Miss Kingley's tones were sharp. "I'm not used to being spoken to in that manner," she said. "Wait a moment."

She walked up to him and he swung awkwardly from his horse, and tried to keep the animal between himself and the girl but she would not have it so and she came around to where he was standing.

"Mr. Griscom," she said, "I thought some time you might become a hero. I did not know that you migh also become a boor, if not a—"

She stopped. Griscom had placed his foot in the stirrup of his saddle and tried to throw himself on his horse. But he pitched headlong forward and lay still. One of his men hurriedly unbuttoned his coat. Miss Kingley threw her hands before her eyes. "No, no," she said. A soldier was holding a flask of whiskey to Griscom's lips. He was trying to talk.

"I didn't want to be a fool," he was saying. "I tried to hide it from you. But it was just as you said. We were attacked and they were cutting us up, and I had to come back, and I got a scratch, and lots of mud, and all that, I—I got another coat, and I didn't do the way you said I would. I couldn't help it. I—I—"

"Never mind," said Miss Kingley. She was kneeling beside him pouring water from a canteen on her hands and bathing his head.

"Forgive all those foolish things I said. You are not the kind of a hero that I talked about. But you're the manliest man I ever knew."—The San Francisco Monitor.

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—Ladies' Home Journal.

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BESTED BY A WOMAN.

President Eliot, of Harvard, Meets His Match in Miss Haley.

President Eliot, of Harvard, met a Waterloo at the national convention of teachers in Boston recently. What made his defeat more inglorious was that it was brought about by a woman, and, still worse, by a Catholic woman. It will be a long time before he forgets the day.

He wanted the National Education Association to let its president select its committee on nominations. The motion was about to be submitted to a vote with a probability of adoption, when Miss Margaret Haley, of Chicago, arose and mildly said that she would like to ask Mr. Eliot a few questions. He was all smiles. She inquired: "Under the proposed bylaw would the president of the association be vested with the right and power to appoint the nominating committee?" Mr. Eliot blandly answered: "Undoubtedly he would." "And," she persisted, "is it not true that the president having appointed the nominating committee, the nominating committee would, in its turn, select the president of the association and the president, so selected, would, in his turn, appoint another nominating committee at the next session?" President Eliot was obliged to confess that the bylaw would operate in that way. "In other words, you propose to fasten on the N. E. A. a self-perpetuating official machine—is that it?" said Miss Haley.

That last question set the association against Mr. Eliot's motion, and when the vote came it was buried beyond hope of resurrection.

Thereafter, in that convention, the two names looked like this: eliot, HALEY!

A chap four years of age met with the misfortune to have his hat blown into the river. When he reached home his father said to him: "Its a wonder you didn't blow overboard, too."

"I couldn't," was the quick response. "I was fastened to my feet.

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