

Sonnet to the Society of Jesus.

Hail, Christ's own glorious hand of champions, hail! Arise, shake off your impious tyrant's fetters;

From the Doctor's Diary.

(Concluded) Ordinarily I'm at death's head at a banquet. Eating is eating and talking is talking, and I don't believe in mixing the two necessary evils.

And so the supper—that's what they call it at the Krodin Sanitarium—went gaily on. And all the time, at the back of my mind, I was fussing over the case of that tall, golden-haired girl whose hand I could have touched as it rested daintily on the white cloth or toyed delicately with fork and spoon.

With the coffee came the speeches and that brought about a slight change at our table. The college professor excused himself and left early—for which he may be pleased to accept my thanks.

Well, I didn't lose my time. I leaned heavily on the table—there is a good deal of me and I devoted myself to her directly and unsparringly. I got right down to brass tacks.

"Miss Carmichael," I said, "Miss Nolan happened to be speaking of you this evening. She said ever so many nice things, of course. But she said one thing that isn't nice at all."

"The girl's eyebrows went up a trifle, though a smile played about her lips. "Yes, I went on, "it sounded not at all nice to me. Is it true that you intend to become a Catholic nun?"

An Ancient Foe

To health and happiness is Scrofula—as ugly as ever since time immemorial. It causes blemishes in the neck, disfigures the skin, inflames the mucous membrane, wastes the muscles, weakens the bones, reduces the power of resistance to disease and the capacity for recovery, and develops into consumption.

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"Don't you be silly, young woman," pouted the table vigorously with my middle finger. "You have no right to shut yourself up in a cloister. You owe the world the best that is in you. It's bad enough—here I discreetly lowered my voice and glanced apprehensively over my shoulder."

"That is the first sensible thing you've said for some time, Doctor." Though her eyes danced her voice grew grave. "It is, indeed, quite another matter."

"Go on, go on," I snapped. "Explain what you mean by that."

"That is what I mean, Doctor, since you are so good as to wish to know. You said a few moments ago that I owe the best that I have in me to the world. Now, I dispute that statement. I maintain that I owe the best that is in me to God."

That came on me like a blow between the eyes. This girl and I were talking two different languages! God! She meant the Unknownable. And how can we owe, "Look here," I insisted, tersely.

"I know what's the matter with you. You've fallen in love with an idea. This thing—" "Spiritual ideas, Dr. Farraday, are not bad things to fall in love with."

"Spiritual grandmothers! Let me tell you something, young woman, even if you do think that I'm an old fogey who ought to be taken out and Oskelized. I'm a specialist on the insides of the human animal. I've cut up more men, women and children than you could stack in this room. I've found a lot of strange things in them, but I've never seen any spiritual ideas."

"That is doubtless because your eyesight is not sufficiently keen, Doctor," she said softly. "I gasped; I had to. The audacity of it!"

"I don't mean to be offensive Dr. Farraday," she continued, "but it is so difficult for you to appreciate my point of view. You argue do you not, that because I appear to possess—well, the promise of worldly success—I should strive in some way or other to make myself a shining mark in the world?"

I nodded—emphatically. Shining mark—that golden hair—pshaw! "If I were to tell you that I decided to take up nursing because I wish to be of service to humanity, you probably would understand me."

"I understand that you are lying I snapped, hotly. That humanitarianism is all bunk. I thought that would rile her but she just beamed.

"I could just love you for saying that!" she exclaimed. "So very few of us has the courage to acknowledge it. Why even during the time I've been here in the sanitarium I've seen enough of humanity to sicken me with it all. I'm sure I'd be an out-and-out pessimist."

"Like me?" "A burst of applause brought us both to a realization of the fact that we had talked right on during the oratorical effort of the senior surgeon—hang him! Miss Carmichael, blushing guiltily, beamed at me."

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gan vigorously to clap her hands. I merely shifted about in the direction of the speakers' table and nodded to Grimwald—curly enough. Then I turned once more to the girl.

"That one thing that keeps you from being a pessimist," I asked, "what's that?"

Slowly, unflinchingly those blue eyes were raised; I felt them scrutinizing my mind. The silence was heavy, exasperating. "I'm afraid to tell you," she faltered. "You'll just grunt or something, and call it a cant. It's so hard for you to—see."

"Look here, young woman, I've had about enough of this. That's the second time to-night you've spoken disparagingly of my eyesight. You owe me an explanation. In the ordinary course of events, what you intend to do with your life is no concern of mine. You can become a nun or go and drown yourself or elope with a chour man for all I care. But I'm interested in you professionally. You're a case; and I'll be dinged if I know how to diagnose you. Come now; what is that one thing?"

Well, then she spoke. I can hear the melody of her tones still running in my brain. Her words—well, I can't remember her words; they didn't matter. But there was something elusive—behind—them.

I was conscious of many things—a girl down the table patting her black hair, an idiot behind her saying something about the fall elections, a burst of laughter at the speakers' table, a carnation was pulled to pieces by thumbs and forefingers that seemed oddly like my own. But distinctly and unequivocally, I was preeminently conscious of something great and sweet and soothing something coming from the girl to me; of an explanation that made her procedure rational, even necessary; of an impulse to get down on my knees and bow my head as in the presence of a sacred thing.

And what was it? Ah, that's what puzzles me now, what puzzled me as I shook hands with Miss Carmichael a few minutes later, what puzzled me as I sat in the tonneau during that long, cold ride along the estuary. Fragments of her speech remained with me, but they are of themselves absurd, and unconvincing. "The love of souls," "God's ways," "the imitation of Christ," "His boundless love," and that seems trivial to me and utterly meaningless, now; but as that girl leaned over the table and spoke—

"They say there's no fool like an old fool and I know it's true; but I pride myself that I'm not the sort of man to be bamboozled by a pretty face. No, no; of one thing I'm certain: It was not a cause of my being hypnotized by what is called feminine charm. It was not that sort of appeal at all. It was a totally new sensation—something, thrilling, refining, energizing. I seemed to be standing on the brow of a hill and looking over a valley a wonderful valley fair to the eyes and filled with fragrance and with promise.

"Bah! this sounds awfully like rot, it is rot as I have set it down. Let me look at it all calmly, professionally. The girl is an enthusiast, a dreamer, in love with an idea."

That explanation somehow doesn't explain. She's not the sort of girl to dream dreams—it isn't her temperament at all. She has no quivering at the corners of the mouth, no shifting of the eyes, no fidgeting hands. Her color is natural, her skin is firm. She is in perfect health. Auto-suggestion? Of course. But that's only a name, not an explanation. Here is something that seemingly baffles science. Is there an answer?

Rothberg must know: Rothberg knows everything in abnormal psychology. But is this an instance of abnormal psychology? I feel that some factor—the all-important factor—I have failed to grasp. There must be something in her peculiar condition that I did not see. Her woman's intuition told her so when she reflected on my eyesight.

That something—that nameless, impalpable, elusive something—that I experienced as she spoke those forgotten words and looked through me with that unforgettable gaze—will Rothberg grasp that?

—Will Scarlet in "Extension."

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"And what are the things you pray for?" "Mostly that pop won't find out what I've been doing through the day."

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