

My mind, curiously enough, rambled back to another moonlit night when I was quite a lad, and when I sat in the stern of the boat with such a beautiful little girl, Anita Grayson by name, a child of 12, perhaps. Some one sitting by had said, "Anita looks like the moon," and I had watched her during the rest of the evening and wondered why, and gone home to dream that I saw the moon in the water, and that it had Anita's face in it. While I was dimly recalling this, and half listening to my friend, I became suddenly quite roused from my dream. Eaton had been saying something about his incapacity to catch a likeness.

"I cannot make the people I paint impress me. One race follows another swiftly, and my model flits away with these specters. Now, only one thing can impress a face upon my mind, I feel sure—impress it so that it will stay by me and haunt me by day and print itself on my soul at night. I have thought it all over. There is but one way.

God help me! I must commit a crime. I must kill some one! That face—his face—will haunt me. I shall see only that, and I can paint it. You see, I am quite calm in this matter. I have reasoned the thing out. I am a good man; my bitterness of spirit will harass me into work. I shall hold my brush with remorse. I shall paint a great, a terrible picture!"

Great heavens! Gleason was right. This is a madman, I thought, and glanced about with my mental eye to take in the situation. It must be strategy versus strength. I saw that at a glance. I must not betray the slightest fear. His plan was settled. I must plot to defeat it. In the first place I must gain time. This might be only wild talk.

"Whom do you propose to kill?" I inquired nonchalantly, although my heart seemed to stand still as I waited for his answer. He lifted his oars, and I could hear them drip, drip in the moment's silence.

"I propose to drown a man," he said. "Then I will tie him to my boat—this, my boat, that you and I are in—and let him float. I shall drink in the sight of that floating face in the dark water, with the moonlight about it, and the world that has scorned me will hold its breath."

"An original plan, indeed," I replied. "Have you chosen your man?"

"I have chosen you."

"You should have selected a handsomer face, or at least have made him shave before starting. A bearded face in the water is—pshaw! very bad. Don't you see?"

My voice sounded steady, and I was lost in admiration of myself as a man of nerve. "Don't you see?" I repeated.

"I shall see, for I shall paint it! You take it coolly," he continued, eyeing me warily.

My thoughts were flying about in confusion. I could not swim. Eaton knew it. I

am a slight man, a mere nothing to this Hercules. No help, indeed, but by my wits. If I was cool so was he. I must try a new tack, unsettle the fixed idea that anchored his wild fancy and gave him this terrible strength of purpose.

"A woman's face would have been better," I suggested. "Something really poetic about that, now! Ah, look there!" I cried, an idea striking me, and pointing as I cried out to the moon mirrored in the water. She had risen, but had been cut off from us in the heavens by a ledge of rock at our left, just beyond this her counterfeit presentment shone round and full in the water. "Look there!"

"What do you see?" cried Eaton, his voice trembling with excitement, his whole body eagerly bent forward.

"A woman's face in the moon in the waves!" I called, gazing fixedly as if at a vision. "What a brooding face! What shadowy hair! What a slow smile! And her eyes! Ah! do you see her eyes? She has opened them! Have you killed her?"

"I swear to you, no!" cried Eaton; "I swear to you, no! I know no such woman! I have never killed her! I have not even broken her heart! Tell me more about her!"

"She is young, very mystical, yet very real, with a smile at one side of her mouth, while the other looks quite grave."

This was a characteristic of Anita's mouth, and it was she I was describing—Anita as I fancied her grown older, for I had not seen her, scarcely indeed thought of her, since that day when we were children.

"It's a pity you can't paint her for me," said Eaton impetuously, as he gazed at the moon. "I don't quite see her, but she sounds great."

"I might try to paint her to-morrow," I suggested, taking a cigarette from my pocket, and relapsing into my calm manner again.

"You forget—to-morrow will be too late. But you shall paint her to-night—now, before I kill you."

He put up his oars as he spoke and came toward me, drawing a rope through his heavy hands. He was in a state of wild excitement, and I felt my light, airy manner slipping away as he approached. I was chilly as—as my watery grave was like to be. Yet I let him bind me hand and foot, and instinctively counted his deep breaths the while by way of something to do. A lurch, a struggle, and I should have been overboard and lost. Now that there seemed a chance for life, I was in terror, and I was more than half out of my senses as I watched my Charon lay me on the hither side of his stream. He took me from the boat as if I had been a child. Then he built a fire.

"I can mix colors by firelight," he cried, and unfastening my hands set his canvases and easel before me, gave me a brush and