

PRETTY MISS NEVILLE

BY B. M. CROKER

CHAPTER VI

FOR LIFE AND DEATH

"Be bold, be bold, and everywhere Be bold!"—Facile Quære.

Maurice spent the most of his leave at Gallow, and the best part of his days were devoted to shooting and hunting. I must confess that it would have afforded us unmixed satisfaction had he brought home empty bags, and been pounded out with the fox-hounds; but we were compelled to admit, even among ourselves, that he both rode and shot remarkably straight; and, more than that, he amazed us by a deed of such daring courage, one frosty Sunday afternoon, that we were obliged to award him a large medal of reluctant, but respectful, admiration.

Maurice was a hero in our eyes—a hero whose sarcasms stung like nettles, who declined our society, derided our manners and appearance, and actually dared to mimic our pure Milesian accent.

There was no shooting on Sunday, and Sunday afternoon was generally dedicated to a long walk or long sleep. Rody and I, who were aimlessly lounging about the yard, saw Maurice starting off toward the bog, accompanied by Carlo, who was bounding and bounding round him in a state of exuberant delight.

"Let us go with him," I observed, impulsively. "It's a nice dry day for walking on the bog."

"I fancy there will be two words to that," said Rody, dubiously. "Berseford would rather have our room than our company, by long chalks."

"We can offer ourselves, at any rate," I answered, airily, tightening the elastic of my hat, as I commenced to run down the lane, shouting "Maurice! Maurice!" at the top of my melodious voice.

"Well, what's up now?" turning round, impatiently. "Where are you going to?" I panted, breathlessly.

"There and back again," was his prompt rejoinder. "All right, we will go with you," I answered with a smirk.

"We are coming with you," I reiterated, launching myself over a very stiff stile with a generous display of navy blue stockings.

"With me?" he echoed, with raised brows and a look of irrepresible disgust. "What have I done to deserve such a treat?"

"Oh, we have nothing else to do, and one walk is as good as another."

"But supposing that I do not wish for the honor of your company. What then?" impressively. "Oh, we will come all the same," I answered, frankly. "The bog is as much ours as yours."

"Endoubtedly," replied Maurice, "but I am going round by the Black Bridge, and you may get more of the bog than you bargain for. It's no easy way for a young lady, and I warn you that I am not going to drag you out of the drains."

"You told me the other day that young I was, but lady I would never be, so that is nothing; and I should like to see the ditch that I could not jump," I concluded, boastfully.

"Come on, then," said Maurice, heroically resigning himself to his fate, and starting off at so brisk a walk that Rody and I could only keep up by assuming a kind of ambling run. For some time we proceeded in silence, over the short green turf, through the whin bushes, and then through the heather, now crossing a deep black bog hole on a narrow, slippery stick, now jumping a wide drain, now scaling a gate. We did not meet a single creature for at least a couple of miles, and then we encountered a boy and girl who were keeping company. They so enamored of each other, and were walking about six yards apart, the girl rolling and unrolling the corner of her apron, and the man chewing a straw. Both looked extremely sheepish as we passed them, and still more confused when Rody, glancing over his shoulder, said, in quite a cursory way:

"That's Micky Brennan and his sweetheart, from Brackna. Give her a kiss, Micky! We're none of us looking."

"Be quiet, you young fool!" muttered Maurice, angrily. "Why should I be quiet?" answered Rody, argumentatively. "I say," he continued, after a silence of a few seconds, "you are as old as Micky. You ought to be thinking of getting married too, eh, Berseford? I heard your uncle tell my father that he hoped you would marry young."

"Really?" with a dubious smile. "I wonder what she will be like?" said Rody, speculatively, after an unusually long pause.

"What who will be like?" asked Maurice, absently. "Mrs. Maurice Berseford, to be sure."

"Like me, of course," I answered, backing gracefully before them both, and winking expressively at Rody. "Like you?" scoffed Maurice. "I would just as soon fall in love with a chimpanzee or a red Indian," he chimed, contemptuously.

"Oh, you might do worse!" I replied, cheerfully. "Any way the red Indian would have the worst of the bargain. Oh, my heart on fire! what a temper she would have to deal with, wouldn't she, Rody?"

"What did you say?" demanded Maurice, stopping short and surveying me with grave astonishment.

"What is that pretty new expression of yours?" "It is not mine, and you need not look so shocked; it's in 'Oliver Twist,'" I replied, with a triumphant toss of my pigtail.

"Pickpockets' slang," returned Maurice, with a shrug of the shoulders, "and all very well for the Artful Dodger, but scarcely—" "I say, here is a yawner," interrupted Rody, who had been walking on ahead. "I shall go round by the stick in case of accidents. Better be sure than sorry!"

"And so shall I," I added, emphatically, as my experienced eye took in the width of the deep black drain, with its crumbling, ragged-looking banks, that lay yawning right in our way.

"Berseford will take it!" said Rody, confidently. "He thinks he will shake us off. Ha, ha!"

And he proved quite correct. Maurice stepped backward a few paces, pulled his hat well down on his head, made a short run, and landed on the opposite side as lightly as a deer, and then walked on, evidently perfectly indifferent to my fate—as to whether I made the transit safely, or groveled in four feet of black bog-water. The stick was narrow, greasy, and extremely wobbly. I found the crossing a very ticklish and delicate maneuver, and was loudly assured by Rody, from the bank, "that I was for all the world like a cat on walnut shells."

However, I got over safely, and soon we had overtaken our companion, and were once more frolicking alongside of him, bandying our light-hearted jests, and Maurice, in spite of himself, was gradually drawn into the conversation.

"By the way, French," he asked, "have you made up your mind what you are going to be—what profession you intend to adorn?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Rody, whirling his stick about; "I would not mind going into the Line if there were no examinations; but they are such a beastly grind—it's not good enough."

"Then what would you like to be?" "Well," reflectively, "I think I'd like to be a farmer; have a good large place, shooting, plenty of young horses, a couple of hunters, and ride and sell, and that sort of thing," waving his hand expansively.

"Ah, I dare say; a good many young men share your tastes. Why not say a four-in-hand, steam-yacht, and a moor, while you are about it?"

"I know what I would like to be," I broke in, impatiently. "Well, let us hear," said Maurice, with benignant toleration.

"I should like to be a girl in a circus. I think it must be delightful," I added rapturously; "nothing to do but ride from morning till night, sticking on, and dancing on those pads. What fun it must be, and quite easy. It's all done by balance. And I should love performing to crowded houses, and showing off; and after a bit I would come out as first lady rider, in the side-saddle and riding-habit business, and do the haute école."

"And what does your grandfather think of your little scheme?" asked Maurice, with exasperating gravity. "He would have a fit on the spot if he heard it even mentioned. He thinks a circus low, fancy that! I had the greatest work to get permission to go to Ball's travelling circus here in Killool. I went with Deb; it was lovely, and oh, how I did envy the girl in the black velvet habit, riding a most lovely Arab horse. How I wished I were her!"

"What a picture you would make!" exclaimed Maurice, with affected rapture. "Well, now I know your tastes. As you French, wish to be a country gentleman, and Nora's ambition is to ride in a circus!"

"Oh, that's all humbug! She is to marry me some day if she is a good girl," responded Rody condescendingly.

"A most suitable match; permit me to congratulate you both," said Maurice, affably. "A charming horse yours will be to stay in—booby-traps on all the doors, squibs for supper, and apple-pie beds for your too-confiding guests!"

"You need not mind," retorted Rody, roughly, "you won't be one of them."

"No, you may strike my name off your visiting list," returned Maurice dryly. "I shall not intrude."

"By this time we had reached the road, and my appearance bore visible traces of our somewhat adventurous walk. My dress was torn, my boots were exceedingly muddy, and my pigtail had come unfastened. Maurice gallantly handed me down, and surveying me with a gaze of cool, dispassionate scrutiny said:

"You look rather picturesque at a distance, but perhaps you are a little disappointing on close inspection, Miss O'Neill."

"She looks like a second-hand scarecrow," added Rody, with his usual candor. "By the way, I wonder if the train has passed?"

"The train at some little distance crossed the road."

"No, not yet," I replied, replaiting my hair with nimble fingers, as I preceded him along the footpath; "I see the gates open, and some people going across."

And there, about a hundred yards ahead of us, sure enough, one gate was flung wide, and a man was bungling at the opposite one and endeavoring to unfasten it, while a horse and cart—in which sat a young girl holding the reins—waited on the line.

"It's Beauty Connor and old Micky," I remarked, as I recognized

the pretty face of a well-known country belle. Her horse, a handsome young bay, was fidgeting and restive, and kept backing, and starting, and pricking its ears; refusing to be soothed and so-bered by the voice of the charmer.

"What is the fellow about? What the mischief is he doing at the gate? He must be drunk!" said Maurice, impatiently.

"Of course he is drunk," returned Rody, composedly. "Who ever saw old Micky Connor sober on Sunday? He has been having a drop below at 'The Cross,' and no doubt sees several gates."

"I don't envy that girl her drive home," returned Maurice, as he noted the fretting, fiery horse, all ready reeking with heat and flecked with foam—and my God, I hear the train!" he inevitably, and I hear of horror. At that moment the low, sullen roar of the approaching express was distinctly audible through the thin, frosty air.

"The train, daddy—the train!" shrieked the girl frantically, standing up in a frenzy of excitement, while her horse plunged violently and threatened to upset her. It seemed to be on us almost in a minute—less than a second it had rounded the curve, and was coming over smoothly—so inevitable—and oh, so fast; and still the man was wrestling with the gate, and still the girl was screaming in the cart. It was more like a horrible nightmare than a ghastly reality.

Rody and I stood rooted to the ground, paralyzed, unable to move, but trembling all over. The next instant Maurice had dashed across the rails, and in another moment, with a sound of thunder, the mail had gone by, leaving the ground still reverberating, and leaving Beauty Connor safe in Maurice's arms, the cart shattered to a thousand pieces, and the horse a crumpled, convulsive, bleeding object in the middle of the six-foot way.

"How awful!" I exclaimed, shuddering. "You are not hurt, are you?" I asked, eagerly, as I ran over to my cousin. "And you have saved her, Oh, Maurice!"

"Yes, she is all right," he answered, breathlessly. "But it was a close shave."

His hat had been whirled away and ground into powder. His left hand had been badly cut, his face was unusually white; but he held Beauty in his arms, unhurt and safe. One could almost tell by his eyes that just now he had looked death in the face, and wrenched a victim from his grasp.

He was supporting Beauty and endeavoring to soothe her, but the awful shock she had just received had entirely unbalanced her. She lay with her head on Maurice's breast, her lovely golden hair streaming over his shoulder, weeping hysterically and moaning pitifully, apparently a dead weight—boneless.

Her father who had been most effectually sobered by seeing his horse and cart dashed to pieces, and his daughter snatched from a similar fate, at last found his tongue, and bobbling up to us said, "Oh, thin, the devil mend it for a train! Glory be to God, Beauty, me darlin', you are safe and sound; 'tis you that had the narrow escape."—taking hold of her. "Only for the young gentleman from the house, you were in smithereens. Bedad, he saved your life at the risk of his own; fair the sight left me eyes; I never saw so near a thing, it froze the marrow in me bones. I was bothered with the gate, and I niver heard the train till she was on the top of us, and it was too late. And the poor young mare! Oh, Holy Father! You're not a hair the worse, Beauty," depositing his daughter on a stone, and hurrying over to where the young gentleman had been. "Bedad, he saved your life at the risk of his own; fair the sight left me eyes; I never saw so near a thing, it froze the marrow in me bones. I was bothered with the gate, and I niver heard the train till she was on the top of us, and it was too late. And the poor young mare! Oh, Holy Father! You're not a hair the worse, Beauty," depositing his daughter on a stone, and hurrying over to where the young gentleman had been. "Bedad, he saved your life at the risk of his own; fair the sight left me eyes; I never saw so near a thing, it froze the marrow in me bones. I was bothered with the gate, and I niver heard the train till she was on the top of us, and it was too late. And the poor young mare! Oh, Holy Father! You're not a hair the worse, Beauty," depositing his daughter on a stone, and hurrying over to where the young gentleman had been.

CHAPTER VII

A RUN WITH THE FOXHOUNDS

"Forward and frolic glees was there, The will to do—the soul to dare!"—Scott.

The well-known "Darefield" bounds hunted in the neighborhood of Gallow. It was out with them that Tom Connor (grandfather's rough rider) broke in the young horses, which he afterward showed off at Ballinasloe or Cahirmee fair as "first-class weight-carrying hunters." Tom was the greatest humbug in the province of Munster. If a prize had been awarded for drawing the long-bow especially with regard to his own equestrian exploits, it would have been Tom's lawful due. He was at his best when engaged in the sale of a horse to an inexperienced English customer.

"Is it thro', your honor?" he would say impressively. "He cannot with conviction to himself thro' less than twelve miles an hour."

"Can he gallop it?" In a shower of rain he can gallop so fast that all the hills in the county fall on his tail.

"Jump water?" throwing up his eyes, as though to invoke the testimony of heaven and earth. "Why wouldn't he? It's canal lepin' ye mane, of course."

Mr. Connor would conclude by flourishing this invaluable animal over the nearest "lep" and selling him to the stranger for a couple of hundred guineas. Tom was a great authority on riding, and admitted, with a certain superciliousness, that Mr. Maurice rode very well for an officer; a class of whose performances on the piskin he had the meanest opinion. How I envied Maurice, as day after day I saw him prancing down the avenue on a handsome young hunter, bound for a meet of the foxhounds!

"Why should I not accompany him?" this was a question that I asked myself ten times an hour. I had a good horse, and if Tom was to be relied upon, my riding "bate all his 'er's," then, query, why should not Freny and I disport ourselves in the hunting-field? This idea, which had been simmering in my brain for months, I at last found courage to introduce to grandfather, abruptly, of course.

"Grandfather," I exclaimed, suddenly bursting into the library, having stood quaking outside with the handle of the door in my grasp for at least ten minutes, "grandfather, may I go to the hunt to-morrow with Maurice? Do let me."

Grandfather gazed at me over the edge of his paper for some moments, in reflective silence. I think he must have been softened by the share list, for, to my great amazement, he deliberately replied:

"You may go if you like, if your cousin will take you."

"Oh, may I? Oh, thank you, thank you, grandfather!" I returned, with an irrepressible jump of delight. Then I glanced at Maurice, who had suddenly laid down his book, and was regarding me with a curious and not altogether amiable expression of countenance.

"You'll let me go with you, won't you, Maurice? I'll be no trouble to you—in fact, I'll show you the way," I added, with a giggle of boastful complacency.

"I'll have nothing to say to it," replied Maurice, rising and figuratively washing his hands of me. "I could not undertake to be responsible for her," turning to grandfather with grave protestation.

"Can she ride?" he added, dubiously. "I know she goes tearing about the fields like an escaped lunatic; but she will want a little judgment, and a certain amount of horsemanship, to follow the foxhounds."

"You make your mind easy about her riding, Maurice," said grandfather, dryly, and without raising his eyes from his all-absorbing paper. "You will find that she can take care of herself."

"But I assure you, sir"—returned Maurice, vehemently. "I did not want to hear what his assurance or argument might be; I was fully resolved to accompany him at any cost, no matter what he said or thought or did; and I sped out of the room, dashed down to the servant's hall, and electrified Dan, who was reading a greasy-looking Freeman's Journal, with the astonishing news that I was going to the hunt the next morning, and to be sure and give Freny my water, and to have him saddled and ready to the minute of ten o'clock."

Then I flew upstairs and devoted the remainder of the evening to preparing my toilet for the great event; mended my gloves, polished up the handle of my whip, sought out a cherished blue tie, and gave my habit an extra brushing. That night I could hardly sleep; I thought over the delicious prospect, then dozed off into broken slumber, then woke again.

Once I dreamed that it was a dream; the mere thought was madness. I got up and struck a light. No, it was all right; there was my gray habit spread out on the old sofa, with a collar neatly tacked in by my own hands before going to bed. There were my gloves, my whip, and my veil. "No, it was no dream," I exclaimed, as, with a skip of delight, I jumped over the candle and once more blew out the light. Behold us the following morning, the cynosure of an admiring circle, as we took our departure from the hall-door. Never was young lady escorted by a more reluctant cavalier than mine. We trotted side by side in silence for a considerable distance, and Maurice's face looking as black as thunder, and expressive of speechless disgust, I wearing a smirk of airy elation on my radiant countenance. What did I care for Maurice's black looks?—not one straw

Grandfather had given me leave to go to the hunt, and ten Maurices would not keep me at home. My companion cast more than one doubtful glance at my gray tweed habit and sealskin cap—not the orthodox ladies' hunting get-up by any manner of means; but inspection, I flatter myself, assured him that I would not "come to pieces," and that, as far as riding went, I was "all there," as he afterward expressed it. It was a fine, soft morning, to quote Dan; a thin Scotch mist was lightly drizzling, the sharp, frosty feeling so detrimental to hunting had left the atmosphere, and falling—perish the thought—would be safe!

Cantering gaily along the grass at the side of the road I felt ready for anything, from charging a gate downwards, so did Freny apparently, as, reduced to a walk he sidled contentedly along the road, Maurice's snorting steed, a handsome brown four-year-old, conscious of all the glories of a brand-new bridle, of his youth, and fine personal appearance, looked exactly what Tom Connor had described him, downright "rampageous," and fit to fly out of his skin!

We arrived punctually at the meet, which was in the village of Rusk, about six miles from Killool. It was already pretty full; the long, narrow street was crowded with led-horses, horsemen in groups and horsemen slowly riding up and down in twos and threes.

Equipages, varying from the lordly drag to the lowly ass's car, lined the street at either side; deeply-laden jaunting-cars were to be counted by the dozen, and spectators by the hundred.

Maurice and I followed the general example, and kept our horses slowly moving to and fro.

As we passed a gay yellow leaden, a large, fair, bold-looking woman, half-buried in furs, put up her eye-glass, and calmly surveyed us from head to foot with an air of supercilious interest.

"Now, who are they?" she asked of a mustached dandy, who with a bunch of violets in the button-hole of his exquisite pink coat, was ranged up alongside.

A block in front compelled me to hear his reply.

"Don't know. I'm shaw, (sure) a new variety of the natives. Queer cut of a girl, eh?"

I moved on, scarlet. I glanced at Maurice; he had heard, I was sure, for he looked rather angry. "I am a queer cut," I confess to myself, as I observe two ladies riding toward us, got up in neat blue habits, severely plain stick-up collars and all hats. My sealskin cap, blue tie (which I thought the ne plus ultra of elegance), and my wide, flapping, chamois-leather gauntlets, were all out of place. I consoled myself by a critical inspection of Maurice—at any rate he was all right. His modest black coat, leathers, tops, and dog-skin gloves bore favorable comparison with the rest of the crowd. I felt a secret thrill of satisfaction as I saw more than one approving eye cast upon Freny, and overheard a gloomy-looking little man, in extraordinarily tight trousers, describe him to his companion as "an uncommon good going, too—forty-five minutes racing pace."

A few minutes later the rest of the field straggled up, Maurice included. There was a cut on his cheek; he had evidently had a fall—ditto his steed, whose head and chest were plastered with mud. He looked not a little surprised to find me, sitting round, in an easy, déjanté attitude, without a cap, and with my tawny mane flowing down my back, receiving congratulations and commendations from a very considerable audience.

However outré might have been my appearance, I had ridden boldly and well. I had lived from first to last, throughout one of the fastest runs of the season. "Where were the two correctly got up young ladies now? Where was the dandy with the violets in his button-hole?" I thought, as I triumphantly glanced round. I was quite the mistress of the position, the heroine of the hour.

Several gentlemen who knew grandfather came up and talked to me, and said very nice things about my horse and my riding. I was cordially invited into King's Court to partake of luncheon and to rest. "To rest!" as if it were likely I could when I had just been presented with the brush! Oh, ecstatic moment when the wet, dragged piece of fur was attached to the off-side of my saddle by the nimble and respectful fingers of the huntsman himself! Rest, indeed! I would not rest till all Gallow and Killool were ringing with my triumph!

My cap was found in the plantation-hedge and restored to me, and I now wanted nothing to complete my happiness.

I felt a very fine person, indeed, as I bowed and nodded my adieux, and trotted off home. As I went along I mentally reviewed every fence and every field, riding the whole run over again, wrapped up in contemplation almost too blissful to realize. Maurice was nearly as proud as I was myself, and I was more impressed by his few words of warm praise and congratulatory than all the other grand compliments put together. I cannot describe the grim satisfaction of grandfather, when I burst into the library, and laid the brush on the table before him, much in the same way as a dog would bring a stick to his master. Neither will I linger to relate the rapture of Dan, of De, of Patsy White, and Tom Connor; even Sweetlips vouchsafed a grunt of approbation.

As I had no means of indulging in "the sport of kings" without Maurice's

seen one or two loose horses, and witnessed various croppers. At first I had a vague idea of offering assistance and stopping to sympathize; but finding that others galloped pitilessly on—my pilot included—did the same. Again we crossed a road, and again the ground descended. At the bottom of a large grass field I described a rather formidable wall, cope, and dash, a novelty in the Darefield country, so famous for banks and doubles.

One man was slowly and weakly setting his horse at it, and two others were vaguely looking up and down the field in search of a friendly gap.

"No, my friend," I mentally exclaimed, as my well-trained eye took in the obstacle, "you will not find a lower place, look as you like."

I observed, as I drew nearer, that one of them was the dandy who considered me "a queer cut of a girl." None of them liked the place, that was very evident, and one of them drawled out ironically: "Make way for the lady—she'll give us a lead," and they moved to one side as I came galloping up.

I put my horse at the wall rather slowly, and threw up my right arm, as he made a tremendous bound into the air—a satisfactory bound—we cleared the obstacle cleverly. We were over, and in another second Freny and I were skimming away across the next field. As we landed lightly on an "on-and-off," or crashed through bushes, or tore along the headlands, I believe I was actually the happiest girl in the whole world.

There was one short check as the fox turned from the hill of Dare, skirted round it, and made for King's Court at its foot. Over a fence into a boggy plantation, I lost my sealskin cap; but what of that, since I had long since lost my head!

Three minutes later we emerged into the lawn, over a nasty wet ditch, and I observed with a sensation no words can describe, that there were only three people with the hounds beside myself—the huntsman, a steeplechase jockey, and my friend Freny, among others. A stiff post and rails divided the park from the pleasure-ground. Over we sailed, close on the huntsman's heels.

"The lady for ever!" screamed three or four eager spectators.

"If it isn't little Miss O'Neill, may I never—It's herself is the devil to ride!" cried an old earthen-stopper, waving his tattered carbuncle madly round his head. "More power to your elbow, miss."

Close by, among some laurels, I heard a tremendous scuffle. The huntsman cried: "Who—oop! worry—worry!" and jumping off his horse, plunged into the middle of the pack.

The poor fox was dead. I was sincerely sorry for him, although I had been one of his most ardent purchasers.

"It's all over, I suppose?" I asked, breathlessly.

"All over this time, miss," returned the first whip, glancing curiously at me, as I sat bareheaded on my panting, blowing bay, whose throbbing sides and extended forelegs gave evidence of a long gallop. "Uncommon good going, too—forty-five minutes racing pace."

A few minutes later the rest of the field straggled up, Maurice included. There was a cut on his cheek; he had evidently had a fall—ditto his steed, whose head and chest were plastered with mud. He looked not a little surprised to find me, sitting round, in an easy, déjanté attitude, without a cap, and with my tawny mane flowing down my back, receiving congratulations and commendations from a very considerable audience.

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countenance, I turned over a new leaf with regard to him, and endeavored to propitiate him by an access of politeness that must have puzzled him not a little. I ceased to allow myself the pleasure of slamming doors in his face and contradicting him flatly. I now agreed recklessly and indiscriminately with everything he said; ran his errands, fetched him the newspaper, pushed the butter and salt in his direction at meal-times, and even went so far as to mend his gloves! I don't think he liked me one bit better all the same; I am sure he still looked upon me as a rude, ugly, ill-tempered hoyden. However, he suffered me to accompany him to the neighboring meets, and that was all I cared for. On the topic of hunting and riding we met on neutral ground, and discussed various runs and our joint experiences most amiably together, as we jogged home side by side, those dim, damp, December afternoons; but, once dismounted, we assumed our ordinary attitude toward each other, viz., an armed peace.

At the end of January Maurice returned to Dublin. I witnessed his departure with very sincere regret; I had now no escort, and was consequently no longer permitted to grace the hunting-field.

TO BE CONTINUED

HONOR THE PRIEST

A TRUE STORY

By Rev. Richard W. Alexander

Sunset was flooding the West with such a glory that men stopped in the streets of the busy city and said to each other: "Look at the sky." And no wonder. The splendor of the heavens was glorious. Great masses of purple clouds, shaded into red and faint rose color, floated in a sea of melted gold; the softer tints of green and amber and mauve lay like islets in the sea, and quivered above the horizon, while the shafts of stronger light visibly shot over the spires and housetops, till the dull streets glowed, and men shaded their eyes and gazed at the sight in half-awed ecstasy. I stood at the end of a long wide corridor in the hospital, at a window facing the West and watched the glory grow dim as the sun-gold descended slowly and grandly behind the river in the distance. Suddenly, the thunder of the motor-ambulance, and the sharp toot of the horn broke the spell, and I turned to another window where I saw down into the courtyard of the hospital—the daily scene repeated, a new patient brought in.

It was an accident case. A handsome young man of about twenty-five, an unfortunate under the influence of liquor, who was run down by a train, and both arms crushed, as he fell with them outstretched on the track, in his stupid, unconscious condition. Why he was not all crushed and killed was a miracle. Carried once to the operating room, it was to a sad conclusion. The doctors were forced to save his life by a double amputation, the left shoulder and elbow, the right arm between elbow and wrist. There was no help for it. The flesh and bone and tissues were a mass of jelly! Blood-poisoning would set in, and death would ensue within twenty-four hours, otherwise.

It was a cruel fate, but pitiful, skillful hands made the suffering short. With the bound stumps swathed in bandages the patient was laid on his white bed, and the nurse at his side waited for the effects of the anæsthetic to pass away.

"I will call you, Father," she said to me, "as soon as he is conscious." "He is a Catholic, for he wears our Lady's medal."

"Very well," I replied.

I walked out to one of the long porches pondering over the fate that was before this mangled being. Both hands gone! and only, apparently about twenty-five. Had he a wife, or child, or mother to support? What a cloud of sadness is over life! I thought of the splendor of the western heavens a little while ago, and looked up at the peaceful sky already studded with stars. What a contrast! And within the great building, glowing with electric lights in every window and corridor, hundreds of beings were lying, praying to the God who created sun and moon and stars, and them—to have mercy on their helplessness. How pitifully weak is man when illness and pain have gripped him. How terrified he is at the great unknown future if he has wandered from the path of rectitude, and yielded to passion. What remorse he feels, and how he longs to atone for the past. There are those for whom death and suffering have no terrors, but they are the few. The majority of men and women quiver at the touch of suffering and shrink at the thought of death.

I was moralizing thus, as I paced the long porch absorbed in reverie, and with deepest pity in my soul for the patient brought in amid