

Destiny Maker.  
She came, and I who loved her,  
I saw that she was fair;  
And with my arms I tried to press her,  
And she was true and true for me.  
But I who had resolved to be  
The maker of my destiny,  
I turned to my task and wrought,  
And so forgot the passing thought.  
She paused, and I who questioned there,  
I had a sudden mood to see  
In my soul a still, small voice  
Enjoin that I should not be true.  
But I, who had resolved to be  
The maker of my destiny,  
I made the gentle maiden down  
And tried to think about renewal.  
She left, and I who wonder fear  
There's nothing more to see or do;  
Those walls that ward my paradise  
Are very high, nor open twice.  
And I, who had resolved to be  
The maker of my destiny,  
Can only wish to see the gate  
And sigh: "Too late! too late!"

### THE CHOICE OF THREE. A NOVEL.

The next fortnight was a busy one for all concerned. The organization of a colonial volunteer corps is no joke, as anybody who has ever tried to raise a regiment of men to be equipped with uniforms, arms, and accoutrements, and a hundred and one other things to be satisfied. Then came some delay about the horses, which were served out by Government stores. At last these were handed over, a good-looking lot, but apparently very wild. Matters were at this point, when one day Ernest was seated in the room he used as an office in his house, reading a new recruit previous to his being sworn, interviewing a tradesman about flannel shirts, making arrangements for a supply of forage, filling up the endless details which the Imperial authorities required for transmission to the War-office, and a hundred other matters. Suddenly his orderly announced that two privates of the corps wished to see him. "Who is it?" he asked of the orderly testily for he was nearly worked to death. "A complaint, sir."  
"Well, send them in."  
"I have a complaint, sir, in entered a curious couple. One was a great, burly sailor-man, who had been corporal-at-arms on board one of Her Majesty's ships at Cape Town, got drunk, overboarded his horse, and deserted rather than face the punishment; the other a quick, active little fellow, with a face like a ferret. He was a Zulu trader, who had ruined himself by drink, and a peculiarly valuable member of the corps on account of his knowledge of the country in which they were going to serve. Both the men sat and stood at ease, Ernest, going on filling up his forms, said the little man.  
"Now, Adam, your complaint; I have no time to waste."  
Adam hitched up his breeches and began:  
"I see, sir, I brought her here by the scruff of the neck."  
"That's true, sir," said the little man rubbing that portion of his body.  
"Because he and I, sir, as it happens, sir, at a difference of opinion. It was his day, sir, to cook for our mess, and instead of putting on the pot, sir, he comes to me and says, 'Adam, what's that he says, sir, a comparing of me to the gent who lived in a garden—why don't you come and take the skins off of the lot, instead of a squinting of yourself down on that—be!'"  
"Slightly in error, sir," broke in the little man; "our friend's memory is not so substantial as yours. What Adam said, sir, was that he was comparing me to the gent who lived in a garden—why don't you come and take the skins off of the lot, instead of a squinting of yourself down on that—be!'"  
"Ah, there you are, dear sir; it is two—three years since we met. I look for you every where, and I see you here, and I come in a quick all through the dark and the rain; and then before I know if I am on my head or my heels, the cruel man he ups a rifle, and do shoot me through the stomach. O sir, what shall I do?" and the great child began to shed tears; "you too, you will weep; you too, love my Wilhelmina and sleep with her one night—boho!"  
"For goodness' sake, stop that nonsense! This is no time or place for such fooling!" He spoke sharply and the low man pulled up, only giving vent to an occasional sob.  
"Now, what is your business with me?" The German's face changed from its expression of idiotic grief to one of relief and intelligence. He glanced toward Jeremy, who was exploding in the corner.  
"You can speak before this gentleman, Hans," said Ernest.  
"Sir, am going to say a strange thing to you this night. He was speaking quite quietly and composedly now, and might have been mistaken for a sane man. "Sir, I hear that you go down to Zululand to fight the Zulus. When I hear it, I was far away, but something came into my head to travel as quick as Wilhelmina can, and come and tell you not to go."  
"What you mean?"  
"How can I say what I do mean? This I know—many shall go down to Zululand who rest in this house to-night, few shall come back."  
"You mean that I shall be killed?"  
"I know not. There are things as bad as death, and yet not death." He covered his eyes with his hand, and continued: "I cannot see you dead, but do not go; I pray, you do not go."  
"My good Hans, what is the good of coming to me with such an old wives' tale? Even if it were true, and I knew that I should be killed twenty times, I should go; I cannot run away from my duty."  
"That is spoken as a brave man should," answered his visitor, in his native tongue. "I have done my duty, and told you what Wilhelmina said. Now go, and when the black men are pressing round you like the sea-waves round a rock, may the God of Heaven be with you, and bring you safe from the slaughter."  
Ernest gazed at the old man's pale face; it wore a curious, rapt expression, and the eyes were looking up at the ceiling.  
"Perhaps, old friend," he said, addressing him in German, "I, as well as you, have a City of Rest which I would reach, and he pointed toward Zululand, as if it were not far off.  
"I know it," replied Hans, in the same tongue; "but useless is it to seek rest till God gives it. You have sought and passed through the jaws of many deaths, but you have not found it. If it be not God's will, you will not find it now. I know you too, seek rest, my brother, and had I known that you would die, I should have done that not to come to you, for blessed is rest, and happy he who gains it. But no, it is

was the most punctilious sergeant-major who ever breathed.  
Twenty minutes later, a long file of men, each with a carbine slung to his back, and a saddle on his head, which, at a distance, gave them the appearance of a string of gigantic mushrooms, were to be seen proceeding toward the Government stables a mile away.  
Ernest mounted on his great black stallion, and looking in his military uniform and the revolver slung across his shoulders, a typical volunteer officer was before them, and he was saying:  
"Now, my men," he said, as soon as they were paraded, "go in, and each man choose the horse which he likes best, bridle him, and bring him out and saddle him. Sharp!"  
The men broke their ranks and rushed to the stables, each anxious to secure a better horse than his neighbor. Presently from the stables there arose a sound of kicking, plunging and whooping impossible to describe.  
"There will be a pretty scene soon, with their backs to the stables," thought Ernest. He was not destined to be disappointed. The horses were dragged out, most of them lying back upon their haunches, kicking, bucking and going through every other equestrian evolutions.  
"Saddle up!" shouted Ernest, as soon as they were all out.  
It was done with great difficulty.  
Sixty men lifted their legs and swung themselves into the saddle, not without some misgivings. A few seconds passed, and at least twenty of them were on the broad of their backs; one or two were being dragged by the stirrup-leather; a few were clinging to their bucking and plunging steeds; and the remainder of Alston's horse was scowling the plain in every possible direction. Never was there such a scene.  
In time, however, most of the men got back again, and some sort of order was restored. Several men were hurt, one or two of the horses were killed, and Ernest and Ernest formed the rest into half-sections to be marched to the place of rendezvous. Just then, to make matters worse, down came the rain in torrents, and the men, who were standing about on the verandas, hugging their babies and crying, or making preparations to go into laager; men were hiding deeds and other valuables, or hurrying to the various meetings, and the Government stores, which were serving out rifles and ammunition to all able-bodied citizens; frightened mobs of Basutos and Christian Kaffirs were hounding in the streets, and telling tales of the completeness of Zulu slaughter, or else running from the city to pass the night among the hills. Altogether the scene was most curious, and Ernest, who was standing on the veranda, looked down on it like an extinguisher, and put it out.  
Ernest took his men to a building which the Government had placed at their disposal, and where they were quartered, not unassisted. Presently orders came down to him to keep the corps under arms all night; to send out four patrols to the north, and four to the south, and at dawn to saddle up and reconnoiter the neighboring country.  
Ernest obeyed these orders as well as he could, but the darkness that they never got back again till the following morning, when they were collected, and in one instance, dug out, into which they had fallen.  
About eleven o'clock Ernest was seated in a little room that opened out on the veranda, and he was reading a newspaper, consulting with Jeremy about matters connected with the corps, and wondering if Alston had found a Zulu Impi, or if it was as yet in the hands of the Zulus, and the shrewd change of the sentry outside.  
"Who goes there?"  
"Who is it?"  
"Whoever it is had better answer sharply, said Ernest; "I gave the sentry orders to speak with his rifle to-night."  
"Bang! bang!" followed by loud howls of "Wilhelmina, my wife! ah, the cruel man has killed my Wilhelmina!"  
"Heavens, it is the Zulu Impi!" cried Ernest, jumping up to the Defense Committee and the Government offices, and telling them that it is nothing; they will think the Zulus are here. Tell two men to bring the Impi here, and to stop his howls."  
"Presently Ernest's old friend of the High Veldt, looking very wild and uncouth in his lamp-light, with his long beard and matted hair, from which the rain was dripping, was hounded rather unceremoniously into the room.  
"Ah, there you are, dear sir; it is two—three years since we met. I look for you every where, and I see you here, and I come in a quick all through the dark and the rain; and then before I know if I am on my head or my heels, the cruel man he ups a rifle, and do shoot me through the stomach. O sir, what shall I do?" and the great child began to shed tears; "you too, you will weep; you too, love my Wilhelmina and sleep with her one night—boho!"  
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not that; I am sure now that you will not die; your evil, whatever it is, will fall from heaven."  
"So be it," said Ernest; "you are a strange man, I thought you a common monomaniac, and now you speak like a prophet."  
The old man smiled.  
"The old man," he said, "Mostly I am mad. I know it. But sometimes my madness has its moments of inspiration when the clouds lift from my mind, and I see things none other than as they are. I have seen your carriage dead. Such a moment is on me now, soon I shall be mad again. But before the clouds settle I will speak to you. Why, I know not, but I love you when first I saw your eyes open thereupon the cold dead. Presently I must go, and we shall meet no more, for I draw near to the snow-clad tree that marks the gate of the City of Rest. I can look into your heart now and see the trouble in it, and the sad, beautiful face that is printed on your mind. Ah, she is not happy; she must work out her destiny, and I would tell you what is in my mind. Even though trouble, great trouble, comes upon you, be not down, for trouble is the key of heaven. Be good; turn to the God you have neglected; struggle against the snares of the senses. Oh, I can see now. For you are sad for all you love there is joy and there is peace."  
Suddenly he broke off, the look of inspiration faded from his face, which grew stupid and wild-looking.  
"Ah, the cruel man! he made a great hole in the stomach of my Wilhelmina!" Ernest had been bending forward, listening with parted lips to the old man's tale. When he saw that the inspiration had left him, he raised his head and said:  
"Gather yourself together, I beg you for a moment. I wish to ask one question. Shall I ever see you?"  
Ernest stopped to bleed from the wounds of my dear wife?—who will plug up the hole in her?"  
Ernest gazed at the man, who was putting the lid of his hat on his head, and he saw the eye of him he could not tell.  
"Taking out a sovereign, he gave it to him.  
"There is money to doctor Wilhelmina with," he said, "and you will like to sleep here?—I can give you a blanket."  
The old man took the money without hesitation, and thanked Ernest for it; but said he must go on at once.  
"So I shall," he said, "asked Ernest, who had been watching him with great curiosity; but had not understood that part of the conversation which had been carried on in German.  
Hans turned upon him with a quick look of suspicion.  
"Rustenburg (Anglic), the town of rest," he answered.  
"I'll do, the road is bad, and it is far to travel."  
"Yes," he replied, "the road is rough and long. Farewell!"—and he was gone.  
"Well, he is a curious fellow, and no mistake, with his cheerful anticipation, and his Wilhelmina," reflected Jeremy aloud.  
"Just fancy starting for Rustenburg at a hour of the night too! Why, it is a hundred miles off!"  
Ernest only smiled. He knew that it was no earthly Rustenburg that the old man sought.  
Some while afterward he heard that he had attained the rest which he desired. Wilhelmina got fixed in a snow-drift in one of the Drakensberg. He was unable to drag her out underneath and fell asleep, and the snow came down and covered him.  
CHAPTER XXXIV.  
MR. ALSTON'S VIEWS.  
The Zulu attack on Pretoria ultimately turned out only to have existed in the minds of two mad Kaffirs, who dressed themselves up after the fashion of chiefs, and, with the aid of a few spears and arrows, were known to be in command of regiments, rode from house to house, telling the Dutch inhabitants that they had an Impi of 30,000 men, and that they were to be ready to march to the north of the city on the 10th of January, and expected to overtake Colonel Glynn's column, with which was Mr. Alston's column, and to take the Zulu road would be.

brave deeds such as become brave men, the time of need, or of failure in the moment of emergency, however terrible that emergency may be." (Chers.) "Ay, my brethren in arms, and here Ernest's eyes flashed and his strong, clear voice rang through the hall, "I, whom England has called, and who have not failed to answer to the call, I repeat, however terrible may be that emergency, even if it should involve the sacrifice of my life, I will stand by you, because I feel I am engaged in a noble cause, and I will stand by you, because I feel I am engaged in a noble cause, and I will stand by you, because I feel I am engaged in a noble cause."  
Ernest sat down amid ringing cheers. Nor did these noble words, coming as they did straight from the loyal heart of an English gentleman, fall of their effect. On the contrary, when a fortnight later Alston's horse formed that fatal ring on Isandhlwana's bloody field, they flashed through the brain of more than one of the brave men, who do not fear to die, and death means duty, and life means dishonor. I know well that you are engaged in a noble cause, and I will stand by you, because I feel I am engaged in a noble cause, and I will stand by you, because I feel I am engaged in a noble cause."  
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