

He looked alarmed, and his eyes shunned mine.  
 "Tut, tut! What is it?"

"Do you think, Sir, that you could possibly send me on some mission for the paper? I would do my best to put it through and get you some good copy."

"What sort of meesion had you in your mind, Mr. Malone?"

"Well, Sir, anything that had adventure and danger in it. I really would do my very best. The more difficult it was, the better it would suit me."

"You seem very anxious to lose your life."

"To justify my life, Sir."

"Dear me, Mr. Malone, this is very — very exalted. I'm afraid the day for this sort of thing is rather past. The expense of the 'special meesion' business hardly justifies the result, and, of course, in any case it would only be an experienced man with a name that would command public confidence who would get such an order. The big blank spaces in the map are all being filled in, and there's no room for romance anywhere. Wait a bit, though!" he added, with a sudden smile upon his face. "Talking of the blank spaces of the map gives me an idea. What about exposing a fraud — a modern Munchausen — and making him rideeculous? You could show him up as the liar that he is! Eh, man, it would be fine. How does it appeal to you?"

"Anything — anywhere — I care nothing."

McArdle was plunged in thought for some minutes.