

The old man sank lower on the pillows. By now the room was dark with a filter of young moonlight on the roofs without. After a while he turned from the window: "Are you still there, sir? I have something more to say."

"I'm here, Captain."

"You have been kind to me. I'll hardly need you, now that Lawrence is here, but I wish to thank you. I may have been harsh at times—I disliked you—the town's light ways—the women you knew—your idleness. I am frank, sir—but after you came home from the war and Lawrence stayed, you were kind to me. I doubted you and you were patient."

"Captain, it is nothing. Larry and I were bunkies, and I promised him I'd look to you."

"You have done well." The soldier's fingers were stealing across the coverlet. "My sword, sir—will you place it nearer?"

The watcher closed the other's hand on the naked steel. One was hardly less cold than the other, but the old man's face spoke peace.

"Would you mind buckling the belt about me? I wish to be dressed, erect when he comes—eh, sir? The honor of the service!"

"The honor of the service, Captain."

"Listen!" The veteran raised his fingers. "Is that the band?"

They waited. "No," said Arnold, "the wind in the balcony."

"But isn't there a step in the hall?"

"Captain, it's only a shingle flapping."

The old man laid back. "I heard music, sir. A