

'I've just got to, Daniel!' persisted Miller, raising his voice. 'I've lived with it. I can't die with it.'

Holman turned abruptly away. The circle about the bed opened to let him pass, then closed again. His wife, witnessing the incident, wished she might sink through the floor. Obstinate and self-willed as she knew Daniel to be, how could he have the heart to refuse anything to a dying man, and with so many people looking on?

Eben Miller himself did not seem to be in the least dispirited or surprised. Always a man of eccentric humor, a queer smile hovered around his lips as he spoke to his daughter:

'Prop me up on the pillows, Jean, and give me a taste of that stuff the doctor left.'

She arranged the pillows deftly, then lifted the glass to his mouth. The strengthening draught caused the flames of life to leap high. The odd smile glinted from his eyes, his utterance grew clearer.

'Friends, I've called you here to tell you something. Away back in the '60's I got the credit for doing a brave deed. I never deserved it. It's true I lugged Brown into camp the day he was wounded at Fort Donelson, but another man picked him up from where he fell in the field, under fire, and got a bullet through his arm for doing it. He'd got him to the rear when he himself sank down, faint from loss of blood, right where I was standing. Friends, I—I've got to tell it. I wasn't running away, but that first battle made me sick—sick all over—and I had just dropped down and let the boys pass on, meaning to follow them as soon as I could stiffen up. 'In the rush and the smoke and the bellowing of the guns, nobody had time to look at his neighbor, and when I staggered into the camp with the Colonel, they thought I'd done the whole thing. The man whose arm was hurt kept still. Next day, when I found my name had gone into the reports, I was for telling the truth, but he stood out against it—the man who had really done it. We hadn't much time for disputing or splitting hairs these days. I fought through—to the end—of the war—and I think my worst enemy—if I have one—can't say—I didn't—make a good fight.'

He moved his hand feebly, and again his daughter hastened to give him of the strengthening draught. After a little he went on:

'When I came back you all made a hero of me, and after a while I got used to it and liked it. It was fine fun sitting on platforms at public meetings and riding in carriages with the Colonel at the head of processions. But the sight of—that other man—overlooked and neglected—kept me from getting too vainglorious. I tried hard—I honestly did, Colonel—to get him to shoulder the credit. At first he said he'd taken your girl from you, and he allowed it would be rubbing it in to lay you under the obligation of saving your life. He said he'd only half saved it anyhow, when he reached me.'

The Colonel, who held fast to Miller's hand, was looking into the face of a stern-visaged woman with whitening hair, calmly, thoughtfully, as a man who has been happily married for thirty years can afford to look at his old sweetheart. Mrs. Holman gazed back wild-eyed, with something like terror gripping at her heart. Across the room, out of the range of vision, a man stood with folded arms resting on a window-sash, his eyes, unseeing, turned toward the street.

Again the tonic was offered the dying man, but he refused it. His voice was failing, however; he held steadily on:

'Lately we've had it hot and heavy. He's argued it didn't matter now for him, and it'd be a bad example for the children, destroying their faith and upsetting the fine example I've been to them. But I believe it'll teach them a lesson worth more—to know the truth. Besides, it matters to me. I've been a thief the better part of my life. I've stolen another man's reputation, and I'm not going to die with it on me. Colonel, Decoration Day comes next week. Promise me—you'll have him—in your carriage—Daniel Holman—the man who saved your life.'

There was a stir in the room—a movement toward the lonely man at the window, whose head had dropped on his folded arms. The Colonel rose from his chair and limped across the room, but the first to reach the lonely figure was a woman, who put her arm around his shoulders and pressed her wrinkled cheek wet with tears, against his own.

On Memorial Day Daniel Holman rode in the Colonel's carriage. But at the head of the procession rode Eben Miller in a carriage with nodding plumes, and the kind hands of those who had forgiven and loved on heaped his last resting place with flowers.—'Ave Maria.'

NOT ACCORDING TO SAMPLE

We were scattered about the smoking-room of the liner in various postures of restful negligence. We had a big passenger list, and there were some odd fish aboard, so we fell to talking about the peculiarities of some of our fellow-travellers.

Prentice, the purser, broke in dogmatically:

'A man's face and manner are samples of goods within. I've been on the North Atlantic run for years and seen a few people, and I never knew a man who didn't carry the sample of himself either on his face or in his demeanor.'

'I differ with you, Prentice,' said McGregor, a sun-tanned Scotchman, who managed the affairs of a fruit company in the Caribbean, and who had taken a flying trip to his native land. 'I've been knocking about the world for some forty years, and I am not labelling a man good, bad, brave or cowardly on sight. I've been badly fooled once or twice.'

'It happened fifteen years ago,' began McGregor, lighting a fresh cigar, 'and I was chief cook and bottle-washer on a ramshackle old tub of a steamer plying between Mexico and Colombian ports. That is to say, I was a mixture of supercargo, purser, and fruit buyer when we reached port. That voyage was a memorable one, for, besides five passengers in the cabin, I had five tons of gunpowder in the forehold, and the powder paid a better freight than the passengers, for it was being smuggled for the use of some Colombian gentlemen who intended lessening the crop of some other Colombian gentlemen whom they styled the government. It's about one of these passengers that my so-called story revolves. There were two Mexicans who, when they were not eating or sleeping, were rolling and smoking cigarettes; a pompous old Englishman who was trying to get to Demerara, and who had an opinion about everything and wanted everybody to chuck their own ideas overboard and adopt his. He had his valet with him. The fifth passenger was a padre or priest, Father Ambrose. He was the most submissive, humble, no-account sort of a man I ever met. He was very thin and pock-marked in the face; besides, he carried one shoulder higher than the other. Nature had been unkind to Father Ambrose. He wore a rusty old soutane that looked as if it had earned retirement and a pension, and he perpetually carried in his hand a thumb-worn dirty little book which he called his breviary. He generally read this book when on deck, but even when he was not reading it he seemed afraid to raise his eyes from his feet. Not once, yes, once, but that comes later, did he look me in the face.'

'I've seemed afraid to assert himself even in defence of his Church, for the old Englishman was a bigoted Low Churchman, and several times had criticised the Catholic Church severely in the padre's presence without eliciting a word from Father Ambrose. I felt a contempt for the man. I never relished your milk-and-water characters, and I thought here was a man who became a priest because he was unworthy to be anything else among men.'

'I come of good old Covenantor stock myself, but I've no prejudice against the Catholic priesthood. I've been most of my life in countries where they are as thick as bananas, and I've learned to respect them hugely. There's a strange paradoxical mixture of submission to authority and possession of authority among them that is wonderful. I have seen a padre who would incontinently start out for the uttermost ends of the earth at the command of his provincial without daring even to think about it; rush into the street and snatch two Mexicans apart ready to carve each other with their matchets, shake his finger under their noses and send them slinking away. I'll tell you, gentlemen, the Latin race must be Catholic or nothing; no other religion can possibly fit it. I've spouted these wise remarks to show I was not prejudiced against Padre Ambrose because he was a priest, but because he seemed an unworthy one for such a high calling.'

'It's all account of the blooming fasting these priests do,' said our captain, pointing to the padre. 'I suppose that poor beggar has had nothing to eat but bananas and garlic all his life till his spirit is killed. If he'd eaten a pound or two of good English roast beef every day he'd be a different style of a man.'

'We were half-way to Colombia when one sultry morning one of the steam pipes blew off with a bang and killed a stoker. We didn't mind this so much, as stokers are cheap and plenty; but we were disabled. The engineer tinkered at the machinery, which was fit for scrap iron, and gave it up. Then some one yelled that the boat was afire, and the engineers and stokers came flying up on deck, for they all knew about the

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