THE CLAMMER AND · THE SUBMARINE ·

WILLIAM JOHN
HOPKINS

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By William John Hopkins

THE CLAMMER AND THE SUBMARINE.
THOSE GILLESPIES. Illustrated.
BURBURY STOKE.
CONCERNING SALLY.
THE MEDDLINGS OF EVE.
OLD HARBOR.
THE CLAMMER.

JUVENILE

THE DOERS. Illustrated.
THE INDIAN BOOK. Illustrated.

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BY

WILLIAM JOHN HOPKINS

TOUT BIEN OU RIEN

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I

DOWN under my great pine is a pleasant place — even in April, if it is but warm enough, and if the sun is shining, and if there is no great wind, and if what wind there is comes from the southwest. It is not so pleasant — I know many pleasanter — if the wind is from the northwest, howling and shrieking as it does often in the winter, picking up the fine snow and whirling it back, leaving the top of my bluff as clean as though it had been swept. Such a wind roars through the ancient branches of the pine, and twists them, and tears at them as if it would tear them off. My pine stands sentinel-like on the top of the bluff, some distance from the edge, and its branches have withstood the winds of many winters. Its age must be measured in centuries, for it is a noble great tree; and in times long past it must have had fellows standing close. It is a forest tree, and its great trunk rises twenty feet without a branch. But its fellows are gone, leaving no memory, and the ancient pine now stands alone.

From the bench built against the trunk one can see many things: the harbor, and the opposite shore, and rolling country beyond, and distant hills, and one hill in particular with a tree upon it like a cross, which stands out, at certain seasons, right against the disc of the setting sun.

One can see, too, the waters of the bay beyond the harbor, and certain clam beds just at the point, and a certain water front; and other things in their season. Old Goodwin's palace on the hill is not visible, except for a glimpse of red roofs above the tops of the trees. There is one other thing which I almost forgot to mention, and that is a hole scooped in the ground just without the shadow of the pine, and lined with great stones. That stone-lined hole has its uses, but the time for them is not yet.

I was sitting on the seat under my old pine, gazing out but seeing nothing of what lay before my eyes. And that was strange, too, for the harbor before me was smiling under a warm spring sun, and the hills beyond were bathed in the blue mist of summer.

Indeed, it seemed like summer. There will be cold weather in plenty, with skies gray and wet. There is always more than enough of such weather in the first half of May, but that day seemed like summer. I had had hard work to realize that it was April until I looked about me and saw the grass just greening in the moist and sheltered spots, and the trees spreading their bare arms abroad. The buds were just swelling, some of them showing a faint pale green or pink at their tips. And my garden was nothing but freshly turned brown earth, not a spear of green.

I have put in my early peas, but not very long ago. They should be poking through, any morning now. And I planted some corn yesterday.

It may get nipped by frost, but I hope not. What would the President think, when he found that I had let my corn get nipped by frost? I mean to do my share — in the garden. That is not the only reason why I hope my corn will not get nipped. It is not likely, for we do not often have frost here so late. It is much more likely that it will be stunted by the cold in May. But what if it does not succeed? It will only mean my planting those two rows over again, and if it escapes I shall be just that much ahead of the others who did not take the chance. I no longer plant my corn in hills. Hills have gone out. Corn is planted in drills now.

I even put in two rows of melons yesterday, but I am not telling my neighbors about it. They would be amused at my planting melons in April. Judson would not have been amused. Judson was a fine old man with an open mind, and he would have been interested to see how the experiment with melons succeeded. I should have told Judson all about it, — he might have helped me plant, — but Judson is dead, and so is Mrs. Judson. It is a loss for Eve and me, for a younger man lives in Judson's house now, a younger man who is not so fine; and he has a wife and a small girl — who pelts me with unripe pears when I venture near the wall — and he has a talking machine which sits in the open window and recites humorous bits in a raucous voice to the wide world. The girl — she is not so very small, probably ten or eleven — would have difficulty in pelting me with pears now, but she might use pebbles instead. She is a pretty fair shot; and the talking machine is not dependent upon season. They had the window open at that moment, and I found myself listening for the raucous voice, while I thought of seed potatoes — at four dollars a bushel, and scarce at that.

So the sun shone in under the branches of the pine, and I basked in its warmth, and I gazed out and saw nothing of what lay before my eyes, and I thought my thoughts. They came in no particular order, but as thoughts do come, at random: the season, and peas and corn and melons and Judson and his successor and the girl and the talking machine and pears and potatoes. I suppose I should not speak of such rumblings of gray matter as thoughts, for thoughts, we are told, should come in order, and should be always under the control of the thinker. Mine are not always under my control, and they seldom come in order. I might as well say that they are never under my control, but are controlled by interest of one sort or another. I make no claim to efficiency. Efficiency is a quality of a machine, as I take it. When our brains become machines, why, Heaven help us! But whatever my thoughts were, whether of my planting or my neighbor's talking machine, they revolved around one idea, and always came back to the point they started from, which sufficiently accounts for the fact that I was looking at the harbor and not seeing it.

War. That was the central idea.

We are at war. I looked out upon the peaceful, smiling water and the peaceful, smiling country beyond, and the tree like a cross upon its distant hill, and I laughed. I confess it: What had war to do with that, or with me, or with mine? I could not realize it. War means nothing to me. It means nothing to many people over here, I believe, but flags flying, and parades, and brass bands, and shouting. If we were in France now — but I am thankful that we are not in France, and that there are two thousand and odd miles of water between.

As for submarines — submarines in that harbor, where they could not turn around without getting stuck in the mud! Or in the bay, where there is none too much water either, and ledges and rocks scattered around impartially and conveniently here and there! I know them well: one ledge in particular which has but one foot of water on it at low tide. And with a sea running — well, I could lead a submarine a pretty chase. I would if the submarine was bound for this harbor. It might choose to get stuck in the mud and sand of my clam beds, which would make them unproductive for years. Even as a civilian I will defend my own.

Well, we shall see; but I cannot believe that the matter concerns us very nearly. And I sighed softly, and smiled, and again I looked at the harbor, and I saw it; saw it with the warm spring sun on its quiet water, and the wooded hills beyond bathed in a blue haze. And I heard a soft footstep behind me, and there came from above my head a low ripple of laughter, and my head was held between two soft hands and a kiss was dropped on the top of it. And Eve slipped down on the bench beside me.

"Why do you sigh?" she asked. "What were you thinking of, Adam?"

"War," I said, and she sobered quickly. Eve seems to have pacifist leanings. I smiled at her to comfort her. "I was thinking that if a submarine should come into this harbor, it might happen to get stuck in my clam beds, and it would stir them all up, and would be bad for the clams. I am afraid I should have to take a hand then. Do you suppose your father would object to my mounting a gun on the point? — say, just under that tree where he keeps his rubber boots?"

She laughed, which was what I wanted. Eve is lovely when she laughs — she is lovely always, as lovely as she was when I first saw her. And the warm spring sun, shining in under the branches of the pine, shone upon her hair, and it was red and gold; as red and as shining gold as it ever was — or so it seemed to me.

"My father would probably help you mount the gun," she said. "Shall I ask him?"

"I will ask him. But your hair, Eve, —"

"Oh, my hair, stupid, is turning dark. Everybody sees it but you. But I don't care, and I love you for it. And you must look out now, for I'm going to kiss you." She seized me about the neck as she spoke, and she did as she had said she would.

"There!" she said, laughing. "Did anybody see? Look all about, Adam. The mischief's done. As if a woman could n't kiss her husband when she wanted to! Now, I'm going to rumple your hair."

She proceeded to the business in hand thoroughly.

"Eve," I cried between rumplings, "there are laws in this State — I don't believe they have been repealed — which forbid a woman's kissing her husband whenever she wants to. It can't be done. And —"

"It can't be done? Oh, yes, it can." She did it. "Now, can it? Say — quickly."

"Yes, yes, it can, Eve. I acknowledge it. But the submarine. You interrupted me. I had not finished."

"Well," she asked, subsiding upon

the bench and smiling up into my face, "what about your submarine? I know of many things which I think more important."

"I've no doubt that there are laws against rumpling hair. There ought to be. It's important enough. But the submarine," I added hastily, for I saw indications of further rumpling; "I was only about to remark that if I were out in the bay —"

"In a boat?" Eve asked, still leaning forward and looking up into my face with the smile lurking about her lovely eyes.

"In a boat. If I were out in the bay, and a submarine suddenly popped up beside me, I should feel much more inclined to offer the crew my luncheon than to shoot them."

"They would all line up on the

deck, I suppose, and you would have your choice."

I laughed. "I should have no gun. Besides, I am a civilian. That is against me. Civilians seem to have no chance worth mentioning."

Eve was looking at me thoughtfully, and there was a look deep in her eyes that I could not fathom.

"You are a civilian," she said softly, "and civilians have no — and what then, Adam? Did you think of —"

"They don't want doddering old men of forty-three, and there is no need. But if my clam beds were in danger I should not feel so amiable. I might even strain a point and try to get a standing that would enable me to shoot alien trespassers properly. But why, Eve? Did you want me to —"

"No," she answered quickly. "Oh, no. I was only thinking."

"I have been thinking. If we had to have a war I am glad that it has come now. Pukkie cannot possibly go, and he might want to. How would you like that?"

Pukkie is our son, and he is ten years old. I knew how it would feel to have him go. I took him off to school last fall. It is a beautiful school, with fine men for masters, and dignified buildings and extensive grounds, nearly three hundred acres, with woods and a lake. I wish I could have gone to such a school. It would have done me good. I mooned about with Pukkie, seeing his room and the other dormitories, and the dining hall and the gymnasium and the classrooms, and the football field, and the woods and the lake, and I tried to be cheerful, but I did not make a success of it. I could not say much. Pukkie was silent too.

And all too soon it was time for me to start on my three-mile ride for the station, and I gave him a long hug and a short kiss behind a clump of bushes; the last kiss, I suppose, that I shall ever give my little son. I have not forgotten how a boy of ten feels about that. And I jumped quickly into the car, and we started. I looked back and waved to him as long as I could see, and he waved to me once or twice. But he looked very small, standing there in the middle of three hundred acres, gazing after the car and waving his cap, and I almost broke down then. It seemed almost as if I were deserting my small son among strangers — enemies, perhaps, for he did not know a soul; my little son who had never before been away from home a single night without Eve or me. For Eve had taught him up to that time, and I had done what I could, — with his Latin and the groundings of his Greek, the very beginnings of it, — what one of my students once called the radishes. I had not the heart to inflict science upon him. I hate it. I ought not to, for I was bred in it, and taught it for some years, which are well behind me. But that was small comfort to me then, and I had hard work to keep myself in control all the way home. But Pukkie did not break down. He may have come near it. I do not know. He has never said anything about it. I have — to Eve. She understood. She always understands. That is the comfort of it.

But Eve had made no reply. She was still regarding me with that look that I could not fathom, although I looked deep into her eyes.

"I think I could manage it," I said, feeling strangely uneasy.

"Manage what?" she asked. "Pukkie's going?"

"Heaven forbid! It was that civilian business that I meant. I think I could manage to change my condition."

"No, no. I want you here, Adam. There is no need to change, is there?" I shook my head, and Eve reached out and took my hand. "You need not change — anything."

It was as if with her love for me, she had great sorrow, and great pity;

though why I was to be pitied was beyond my understanding. I do not regard myself as a proper subject for pity. But there are many things beyond my understanding. Eve will enlighten me in her own good time. And as we sat, there was another step on the grass behind us, not soft, but hasty. And Eve unclasped her fingers from mine, and turned. It was Ann, the nurse.

"What is it, Ann?" Eve said. "Where's Tidda? Gone again?"

Then Ann explained that she had but turned her back for a minute, had gone into the house for her knitting, and come right back — had run every step of the way going and coming — and Tidda had disappeared. Tidda is our daughter, aged eight. Her name is not Tidda, but Eve, as it should be. She has a propensity for running away, although I do not think that her excursions are planned. She is a true apostle of freedom, and when she observes that nobody is about, she regards it as an opportunity heaven-born, and she makes the most of it. I can hardly blame her. A girl of eight, and tied to the worthy Ann's apron strings! How should I have liked it, at the age of eight? She would sympathize with our aims in this war we have undertaken. But Eve had risen, and was about to go.

"I suppose I had better stop at Cecily's," she said, "and at every house on the road to father's. She may turn up there. Ann can stay here. I wish," she added, laughing, "that I knew some way —"

"I'll go with you."

"I'd love to have you, Adam, but you'd better go around by the shore. Meet me at father's. Good-bye."

And she was gone, swiftly. She always has some ill-concealed anxiety over these disappearances of Tidda's, and so, for that matter, have I. I got up slowly and started toward the head of that steep path to the shore; but stopped halfway, and turned and went to my shed, and got my hoe and my rubber boots. It was yet early in the season for clamming, but my way led past the clam beds, and the tide was almost down, and I might at least see how they were getting on. So, my hoe and my boots in my hand, I went down the steep path, and strode along the shore. And, as I came nearer that place which is ever near my heart — where the sod breaks off to the sand just above my clam beds — I thought I got a glimpse of drapery behind a tree-trunk. There are trees there, pretty near the edge of the three-foot bluff, the beginning of a grove which is Old Goodwin's; and a path runs back to his house. I saw that the gleam of white I had seen was from a white dress, a small white dress, a dress that somehow seemed familiar; and I saw a small leg in the air, its stocking in the process of removal. I stepped forward without caution, and I grinned down at my small daughter. It is impossible to be cross with her, she is always so perfectly confident of having done nothing which she should not have done.

So I grinned down at her, and she looked up and grinned back at me.

"Going in wading," she announced

cheerfully, continuing to push the stocking, which did not seem to want to come off.

"Going wading, are you? Well, don't be in a hurry, Tidda. Let's talk it over."

She did not relax her efforts, but she shook her head.

"Have n't got time to talk now," she said. "Daddy, you help me get my stockings off. They won't uncome. They're an awful bother."

"Wait a minute." I stepped back and looked up at my bluff. There was Ann watching me, and evidently anxious. I signalled to her that Tidda was found — we have a code for the purpose, and Ann is letter-perfect in it — and she signalled that she was much relieved and would find Eve and tell her. Then she disappeared.

I sat down beside my daughter. "Now, Tidda," I said, "there are several good reasons why you should not go wading. The water is very cold still, and —"

"Pull this one, daddy," she said, ignoring my remarks, and sticking out toward me the leg with its stocking half off. "If you take hold of the toe and the heel and pull, it'll uncome. I can't do it, because I can't get hold from that end."

I laughed.

"I was saying that the water is very cold, and that mother would n't want you to go wading."

She pointed accusingly at my rubber boots. "You're going."

"Not necessarily. I only brought them down in case I should want to."

"Well, I do want to."

"If you had rubber boots and warm stockings under them —"

"Get me some rubber boots."

I sighed and laughed. "I will," I said, "but I can't get them this minute. Will nothing less satisfy you? You sit here, and I'll go and see how the clams are getting on. I will bring you one."

She was on the verge of tears. "I was going to see how the clams were myself. Dig 'em with a stick. I can find 'em. I've found lots."

"What do you do with them when you've found them?"

"We play with 'em, and we had a clambake once."

"Were the clams good?"

"Pretty good. There were six of 'em, one apiece and two for Ann. But she did n't eat hers. She said they were n't done, and that she was n't a fish to eat raw clams. Oh, look, daddy!"

Old Goodwin's ocean steamer was lying at her anchor, but I could see nothing unusual about her.

"No," said Tidda, "not grandpa's, but out that way. Is it coming in here? It comes fast, does n't it?"

Set right by Tidda's pointing finger, I saw the steamer, but I could not make out what she was, whether yacht or war vessel. She had the lines of a torpedo boat, and was painted gray, with lines of bull's-eyes along her sides, and no deck to speak of, where one could sit in comfort; but plainly she was no torpedo boat, and as plainly she was not a steam yacht of the common type. She was nearly two hundred feet long, I judged, and of great speed.

"It is coming here," cried Tidda in some excitement. "See! It's going close to grandpa's."

As she spoke the vessel rounded to an anchorage at a safe distance from Old Goodwin's. She came at very nearly full speed, then there was a tremendous commotion under her stern which seemed to stop her short, her chain rattled out, and she lay quiet, the only evidence of her effort being the white water, which spread on either side of her and for a long distance ahead. A motor launch was lowered before her anchor touched bottom, several men got in, and it made for Old Goodwin's landing.

We had not heard the step behind us.

"So here's my little girl," said Eve. "Oh! What boat is that, Adam?"

"That is a little boat of Tidda's. She found it. But I'm glad you have come, Eve."

Eve laughed and sat beside me, and she began to pull Tidda's stockings into place. But she said nothing about it, and Tidda did not notice it. And when she had the stockings smooth on the little legs she stood her daughter on her feet and straightened her dress with a touch. Then she got up.

"Come, Adam," she said, "let's go up to father's. He wants to see you. He told me as I came down."

And I got up without a word, and I took one of my daughter's hands in mine, and Eve took the other, and Tidda danced along between us on the path all the way up through the grove to the great house. And I looked at Eve, and I smiled a smile of content, and she smiled back at me. Then her smile changed to one of amusement as she saw what was in my other hand, and I looked, and I was carrying my old battered boots and my clam hoe. But Old Goodwin would not mind.

II

OLD GOODWIN saw us coming from afar, Eve and me and our daughter, and he ambled down to meet us. He gave me his old slow smile of peace.

"You see," I said, holding up my boots and my clam hoe, "I'm getting flustered. I did n't know I had them. I should have left them at the shore."

"I see," he said. "Let me take them, Adam. You will need these. But perhaps you had better take them with you. You might forget again."

"I'll hang them on my watch chain. But Tidda ran away again."

"I know," he said. Tidda had run

to him, and was clinging to his hand. He stooped and swung her up to his shoulder. She has got to be a heavy load for a man's shoulder, and he an old man. But Old Goodwin did not look like an old man. "I wish Pukkie were here," he said, "to balance."

"We wish he were — to balance. It is less than two months now, and he will be."

"Put her down, father," said Eve. "She is heavy."

"I like her up here," he said, "where she is near. I'll put her down if she gets too heavy."

And he led the way to the house, and up the steps, and through various sections of piazza, each with its tables and chairs and cushions, to that ample section on the water side, with its telescope and its view of the bay. There, before us, were the ocean steamer of Old Goodwin and the new arrival, as yet unknown to me; and beside us was Mrs. Goodwin, and as I turned to greet her I saw a girl sitting beside her, but a little withdrawn and in the deeper shadows. In the glance I gave, I saw only that she was of pleasing countenance, and quiet eye that seemed to take in all that passed, and mouth with little curves of humor about the corners, and she had hair of the colors of Eve's great beaver muff. There are beautiful colors in that beaver muff. Introductions followed. I missed her name, as I always miss new names; and before the introductions were well over, there trooped in Jimmy Wales, and Bobby Leverett, and a young fellow whom I did not know, all in uniform of one sort or another, and Tom Ellis, whom I did know. He lives almost across the road from me.

More introductions followed; but when it came the turn of the young fellow whom I did not know, the girl laughed, and held out her hand.

"Hello, Jack," she said with evident satisfaction. "I had no idea that I should see you here."

"Nor I you," he replied. "But are n't you glad? I am."

And she laughed again, and bade him wait and see.

The young fellow's name was Jack Ogilvie. And when I had found that out we drifted into chairs, and began to ask questions. I was next to Bobby, who is a cousin of Eve's.

"What boat is that, Bobby?"

"Rattlesnake," said Bobby. "She

was the Ebenezer, but they changed it. Too bad, when we had a name that just fitted. We're in the navy now, you know. We're all U.S.N.R.F., Class four. The Ebenezer belonged to Jimmy and me, but the Rattlesnake belongs to the U.S. We offered it to them, and they took it so quick it almost took our breath away. She makes thirty miles an hour easy, and a little better if we drive her. You know that I'm a partner of Jimmy's now."

I nodded. Seven years ago he was office boy, just out of college.

"Any clams on this piazza, Adam?" Bobby asked. "I see —"

"Yes," I interrupted, "anybody might. These boots are not invisible. I wish they were. Neither is the clam hoe. Circumstances beyond my control, Bobby, — But what is Jimmy?"

"Jimmy? Oh, Jimmy's lieutenant commander."

"And you are an admiral?"

"Well, no. They offered me that rank, of course, but I thought I'd rather be under Jimmy. I'm a lieutenant. Ogilvie'll be an ensign as soon as he's of age. They don't often give commissions to fellows until they are twenty-one. He's not through college yet."

"Chasing submarines, Bobby? How many periscopes have you shot off?"

Bobby laughed. "That information I am unable to impart, Adam. Undoubtedly it would give comfort to the enemy. But we shall be chasing submarines pretty soon. That is to be our job, so far as we know now. We have a number of chasers under our command. Personally, I'd like to be in patrol work out in the steamer lanes. Our boat is too good for this in-shore work. You know the Smith saw a submarine a week or two ago."

I shook my head. I have no faith in that report. Everybody has been seeing submarines from Eastport to the Gulf.

"We picked up Ogilvie at Newport," Bobby continued. "I knew him, and he'd been doing police duty there, and going through training that he knew as well as his alphabet; nothing that was any mortal use. So I asked for him, and he was transferred. They don't seem to get on very fast at Newport with our fellows. I don't know why. They have more boats than they are using, but most of them are small and slow, and they have been busy with men for the regular navy. I suppose they'll get around to the rest of them in time. We are going to have good big chasers some time soon."

"Ah, Bobby, but when? I could give you some statistics of our navy, but I won't, for I don't believe you'd stay. I have been reading an article packed full of valuable information which ought to be of some comfort to the enemy. It seems that nearly all of our vessels are old or slow or both — or they are in reserve in one form or another, without full crews; and we have no submarine chasers — literally none that would be of any use in chasing. We shall not get any before next January, and then only a beggarly hundred or so. It looks pretty bad, Bobby. We might as well surrender at once."

Bobby smiled. "I know where you got that dope. I saw it too, and I wonder what good the chap thinks he is doing by making out that we have gone to the dogs. He's a knocker. Pay no attention to him, Adam. I have faith that all our navy men are n't fools. There may even be one or two who know almost as much as he does. You ought to conduct a few patriotic meetings. And be a speaker, Adam. You could make glorious speeches. I'd come."

"Flags flying,— to the great advantage of the Bunting Trust,— and 'The Star Spangled Banner' sung several times, and you'd have to stand with your hat off, and take cold in early May, and hear every man in the county who has ever held office give the history of the country, and Washington's Farewell Address, and Lincoln's Gettsyburg Speech delivered by a talented young lady from our high school,— if we had one,— and brass bands, and parades, and me for drum-major, I suppose, Bobby. Buncombe! There would n't be an able-bodied man in the glorious assemblage — except the band and the speakers. Humbug and buncombe! True patriotism does n't go about waving the flag and shouting. Patriotic meetings are essentially for women and children."

Bobby laughed delightedly. "Noble sentiments, Adam. But I wish you would."

I shook my head. "Never," I said. "But I could give you some hints for your submarine chasing. You could put them in as your own ideas too. I promise not to dispute your claims."

"I'm a little shy of your hints, but fire away."

"Well, this is my best. I have others, but they are too obvious. First you would have to set a spindle on Great Ledge, a spindle with a capacious cage at the top. Another one on Sow and Pigs, and one on Hen and Chickens, and on Devil's Bridge. Then, when there were some submarines over here,—Germany says there are none now, and I believe it,—when they came, put a live pig in each of the cages. It's in the nature of baiting the trap, you see. All you'd have to do would be to sit tight, and remove the wrecks. They'd all pile up on those ledges. Germans can't resist the lure of pig."

"That's not a half bad idea, Adam," Bobby said. "Of course it might be necessary to renew the bait or feed the pig, but that would be easy; and pig is pretty high just now. There's a good pun there, but I'll leave it to you. — Jimmy!"

Jimmy was talking to the girl whose name I did not yet know, but he turned at Bobby's hail.

"Jimmy," Bobby said, "Adam's just given me a most valuable hint for trapping submarines. Here it is in all its beauty." And he proceeded to give my idea in more detail than I had done, adding some more ledges which appealed to him as likely spots, Watch Hill Ledge, to the east of Fisher's Island being one, I remember. "You forgot that, Adam. It would be a crackerjack, almost level with the water. In any sea at all, and the tide right, the water opens every little while and shows the rock. It's fearsome."

"Is Adam going to leave all the work of danger," asked Jimmy, "to us?"

"Yes," Bobby cried, "that's what I want to know. Like baiting the traps, you know. It'll be no snap to get the pigs into their cages."

"You can't expect to have all your problems solved for you, Bobby," I said. "You would always have the benefit of my counsel, and giving counsel to you and Jimmy is not without its dangers. Besides," I added, modestly I hope, "I did have something else in mind. In addition to the arduous toil of tilling the soil—"

"Cut that," said Bobby. "As if you did n't always till the soil!"

"In addition to that," I continued with dignity, "I thought of organizing a company to protect some of our most valuable property here. It would be a sort of Home Guard. Submarines, if they escaped the traps and the hawk eyes of the patrol fleet, and the stings of the wasps, might get into the harbor. Then they would surely get aground, possibly on my clam beds, and they would ruin the dispositions of my clams. So I thought of mounting a gun on the point — with Mr. Goodwin's permission — and enrolling all here present in the Clam Beds Protective Company, of which I should be captain."

Old Goodwin applauded the idea at once, but as well as I could judge in the confusion which followed, Jimmy and Bobby and Tom Ellis were not of the same mind.

Finally Tom made himself heard. "What I want to know, Adam," he asked, "is where do we come in? I think I voice a general question."

"I was about to nominate Mr. Goodwin for colonel,— honorary, if he prefers,—and Jimmy for adjutant, and Bobby and Mr. Ogilvie for lieutenants. Those posts would have to be honorary also, unless the navy could be prevailed upon to assign them to that duty. I don't see that there is anything left for you, Tom, but to be the private. It would be a highly honorable office. You would be the only private."

"I say," Tom protested, "I like that! But I have an idea. What about the Susies who sew shirts for soldiers? Are n't you going to give them a chance?"

Eve interrupted at this point. I was glad to have her.

"Oh, yes, he will," she said. "I promise that he will."

"Seems to me that Eve ought to be elected captain," Tom observed. "But perhaps it is n't necessary. She will be anyway." They all laughed at that — all but me and Ogilvie. Eve noticed that. I did not see anything ridiculous about the idea. I am glad to serve under Eve, and everybody knows it.

"I will enroll Cecily," Tom pursued; "but, Adam, make me a sergeant, won't you?" he added in a hoarse whisper. "I want to have some authority over her."

"I'll see about it. I shall have to think it over, and perhaps get some advice." And Tom turned at once to Eve, and whispered, and she smiled and nodded.

"The uniform, Adam?" asked Old Goodwin. "Don't put us to any unnecessary expense."

"I was about to speak of that. I have brought some samples with me." And I held up my boots and my clam hoe.

Old Goodwin smiled. "That is very satisfactory." He looked at Tom. "If anybody prefers a rake for arms, I suppose there would be no objection, Adam?"

I shook my head. Then there were objections from Jimmy and Bobby, on the ground that they would have to buy boots and hoe, and that the boots would be new and not in keeping. But I said that, as their offices were honorary, they would not have to provide themselves with uniforms, and they could go clamming in their naval uniforms if they liked. I should not object.

"Well," said Bobby thoughtfully, "we have boots and slickers and sou'-westers. Perhaps they will do. When is the first meeting of our company — at the clam beds, Adam?"

I told him that it was a trifle early for that yet. It would be as soon as I thought it safe for the clams. Then a thought struck me.

"How does it happen," I asked, "that a patrol boat can be coming in here — for all the world like a yacht — and all its officers come ashore, as if they had nothing to do?"

Eve had been silent for some minutes, occupied with her daughter, who stood silent beside her. Tidda had been strangely quiet.

"Yes, Bobby," said Eve, "account for yourself. What are you here for? It is not for nothing."

"Sh! The movements of shipping are not to be reported. But I don't mind telling you, Eve, that we regard this as a base, in a sense. I came because my superior officer ordered it. I don't know his reasons, but I surmise that he hoped that some of you people would be charitable enough to ask us to dinner."

Jimmy grinned, and Old Goodwin smiled, but he said nothing. Jimmy Wales and Bobby are especial favorites of his, and Bobby is his nephew.

"I speak," said Eve, "for Mr.

Ogilvie. You can't come, Bobby. You'll have to stay here with Jimmy."

"Oh, I say, Eve!"

"No. You may bring Mr. Ogilvie within sight of the house, and show it to him." She turned to Ogilvie. "You'll come?" she asked, holding out her hand.

Ogilvie seems a nice young chap. He bowed very prettily over Eve's hand, and said something nice, I am sure, for I was watching Eve's face. I can tell always. And Ogilvie smiled, and Eve got up to go, and I got up too, of course, and Jimmy and Bobby and everybody got up one at a time, as if it were a prayer-meeting. It broke up the party to have Eve go. Eve's going is very apt to break up any party.

Bobby came out with us through the interminable series of piazzas.

"I say," he whispered, "who's the new girl, Adam? Do you know?"

I shook my head. "I did n't hear her name, Bobby, and I don't know anything about her. She is attractive."

"M-m. I'll ask Eve."

Eve said that the girl's name was Elizabeth Radnor, but she knew nothing about her, and had never heard of her before. "But," she added, "why don't you ask Jimmy? — or Mr. Ogilvie? He knew her before."

"So he did. Good idea, Eve. I will. But Jimmy ought to be ashamed of himself. He's married, and I might tell Madge. We never know what we might do."

Eve laughed at him. "Did you think you could worry Margaret?"

"I thought perhaps I could worry Jimmy. But he does n't worry much." We were at the head of the steps. "Well, good-bye, hard heart, spurning the beggar from your door. I hope your conscience will give you no rest."

Eve laughed again, and Tidda piped up a good-bye, and Bobby turned back. And, by the time we had reached the bottom of the steps, Old Goodwin had caught us, and had taken Tidda's hand.

"I thought I'd better come, Adam," he said, "and see about the emplacement for that gun."

So we wandered down to the bank, where the sod breaks off to the sand, and we lingered there, saying nothing and watching the sun get lower. And the day, that had been as warm as summer, grew somewhat chill as the sun sank nearer to the bearded hills, and our daughter was restless and wanted to go home. So we wended along the shore, and Old Goodwin left us, and we went up the steep path that leads to my bluff, and there we found Ogilvie under my pine, standing silent and looking out over the harbor to the west.

Ogilvie was modest and unassuming and pleasant. He spoke when he was spoken to, and sometimes when he was not, but he did not volunteer anything about himself, although he was very ready to answer questions. Eve succeeded in finding out something about him without seeming to try. He went down to Newport about the first of April. Naturally enough, he seemed a little disappointed that the authorities at Newport had not seemed to be ready for him, and that his preparation had been largely a waste of time. He had been four days on a watch boat, guarding Newport harbor, piloting vessels in through the nets, and incidentally, one very thick night, carrying away the mooring buoys of one of the nets; then he had been put on police duty in Newport, running in drunken sailors, or just walking back and forth on his beat, trying to keep awake. Then there had been more drill, and he had been transferred to the Rattlesnake.

Then we talked of books, the theatre, and gardening, in which he had had experience. My heart warmed to him, and we discussed corn and melons and asparagus and peas and beans and squashes and cucumbers and chard and okra and such like for more than an hour. From them we progressed to more intimate things, when suddenly a noise started just outside the window, and he rose with a smile, saying that it was a noise of Jimmy and Bobby singing "Poor Butterfly," and he supposed it meant that he must go. And he thanked us very nicely, and went out into the night. I went with him and asked them in, but they assured me that I was an ungrateful wretch, and they would have nothing to do with me and my invitation.

So they went off down my steep path to the shore, still singing "Poor Butterfly," I suppose, although I am unfamiliar with modern classics. And Eve came out and joined me, and we heard them going along the shore, stumbling over great pebbles, and the poor butterfly fluttering off into the distance. And when we could hear no more of it we went in, and I shut the door as softly as I could, but the sound of its shutting went booming through the house; and I smiled as I blew out the candles, and I was smiling still as Eve took my hand in hers and we mounted the stairs together.

III

JOFFRE was in Boston on Saturday, the 12th of May. Viviani also was there, and some others, but the marshal, the hero of the Marne, was the attraction. Eve acknowledged as much to me on the evening before the event.

"I do want to see him," she said, "and I suppose you'll think it foolish, but I'm going up. Probably I shall cry when I see him. Adam," she added somewhat wistfully, "you don't want to go, I suppose? Father will take us in his car — the new one."

That about the "new one" was plainly nothing more than bait.

"Why should I want to go," I said. "except to go with you? I always want to do that. And I should be glad to be with your father, but no more in his new one than on our bank at the shore. Not so much. There is much to do here. Why should I want to go, Eve? I don't want to cry."

She laughed. "No reason, Adam, unless it is to stir your imagination."

"My imagination is stirred sufficiently here. You know that I detest crowds, and parades. And I was going to plant again to-morrow."

She sighed softly, and smiled adorably. "Well, Adam, plant then. I knew it would bore you to go. The middle of a crowd watching a parade is no place for you. I should love to have you with me, but I think you had better not come. I don't want *you* to cry." And she laughed a little, unsteadily.

"I might," I said somewhat gruffly. "It is conceivable. But there is one thing. I hate to speak of it. Your father ought not to go off on these long trips any more without a chauffeur. There may be hard work to do, and he is — not young, Eve. Besides —"

"He is going to take a chauffeur," said Eve, interrupting me hurriedly. "I think it almost breaks his heart to acknowledge it, but he realizes that he ought to. Of course that would n't make any difference about your going."

I shook my head. It was no part of my objection that I might be called upon to do some hard work. I had planned to do a good deal of hard work at home.

So Eve set off about eleven the next

morning alone with her father and the chauffeur. Old Goodwin was in the driver's seat, and it did not seem likely that the chauffeur would have anything to do. And I stood in my garden clothes, leaning on my hoe, and waved a good-bye to them, feeling half regretful and wholly self-reproachful; and Eve made her father stop, and she called me, and I came running, and she leaned out and kissed me, and she went off smiling. I looked after them, and they had not gone more than a hundred yards or so when they stopped again, and Tom Ellis and Cecily came out of their door and got into the back seat with Eve. And I smiled, and turned, and went back to my garden, thinking that the best of women — and I gave a little start, for it had occurred to me that the chauffeur was a Frenchman. And I wondered if they — but of course they did. Such things do not happen by accident — with Old Goodwin and Eve.

It was cold for the season. It had been cold and wet for three weeks, and my corn was not up, nor my melons that I had put in three weeks before, nor my beans. My experiment with melons has not yet been a failure if it has not been a success this year. I was doubtful about the corn, so I dug up a kernel, and I found it sprouted, and I put it back and covered it. My peas were up, and doing bravely, and the beans were about breaking through, for the earth was cracked all along the rows. And I got out my sections of stout wire fencing, and put them in place along the rows of peas. They take the place of pea-brush, and are much easier to put up and to take down. The fencing is fastened to stout posts, and the posts have pieces of iron, about a foot and a half long, shaped much like a marlin-spike, bolted to them for driving into the ground. I can take my sledge-hammer and drive the posts, and get a row of peas wired in a tenth the time needed to set brush, and the fencing is much less expensive, in the long run. My fences have done service for thirteen years already, and they are perfectly good.

So I fussed around among the peas, and planted more corn and more beans, and more melons, and a row of chard, and two rows of okra, and some other things. I often think that the place for tall green okra is the flower garden. The blossoms are beautiful, delicate things, more beautiful than most of the hollyhocks. And now and then I stopped my planting — a man has to rest his back — and I leaned on my hoe or my rake or whatever I happened to have in my hand, and I thought my thoughts. They were many, and they were not, at such moments, of my planting.

The harbor was almost empty still. There was but one fisherman's boat and two motor boats, little fellows, not suited to patrolling. And the sky was gray, and getting darker, and the winter gulls flying across, and wheeling and screaming harshly. Occasionally a gull beat across my garden, flying low and screaming his harsh note. I watched them, and envied them until I saw a fish-hawk sailing high up among the clouds. Then I envied him: his calmness and serenity, and his powers of wing and eye, seeing the swimming fish from that height, and perfectly secure. Then, naturally enough, I thought of aeroplanes, sailing and circling like the great hawk, and seeing their prey as surely as he. I never had the slightest wish to go up in an aeroplane. The hawk seems secure in his sailing, the aeroplane does not, and I may envy the hawk while shrinking unaccountably from the aeroplane. But if they can see the submarine from up there, and can pounce upon it as surely as the hawk strikes his fish — well, if we had a plague of submarines, it would be a comfort to see a hawk now and then. And I thought of Jimmy Wales and Bobby Leverett and Ogilvie searching the waters for that which was not.

Jimmy has put in here every few days. It is hard to see why, but we have seen a good deal of Ogilvie and Bobby, and Bobby has seen more or less of Elizabeth Radnor. She is still rather a mystery to me, a girl that Mrs. Goodwin chanced upon somewhere, and took a great fancy to. That is not strange, that Miss Radnor should have been fancied, but it is strange that Mrs. Goodwin should have taken the fancy, and that she should have asked her here for an indefinite stay. Mrs. Goodwin did not use to fancy obscure teachers of athletics or gymnastics or dancing in girls' schools, and Miss Radnor is or was something of the kind. She may be giving lessons in dancing to

Mrs. Goodwin for all I know — or to Bobby. It is not of much consequence. If Bobby should really come upon submarines, it would be of little consequence to him.

Thinking upon submarines, there came into my head the account that I had just seen in the London "Times" of the capture of a submarine by a trawler. As I recollect it, the trawler was going about her business in the North Sea — a business not unconnected with submarines — when suddenly a submarine began to emerge from the deep just ahead. The trawler put on all the speed she had time for, and rammed the submarine amidships, sliding up on its body half her length, so that the captain found himself well-nigh stranded near the periscope. Whereupon he called for an axe, and smashed that periscope into scrap iron and fragments of glass. The trawler then slid off, and the submarine opened, and the crew poured forth upon her deck and forthwith surrendered, and the trawler towed them into an English port. Thinking upon this, I laughed aloud to the gulls and the hawk. I had refrained from going to Boston to have my imagination stirred by looking at a parade and listening to the bands!

To stir my imagination! I had but to picture to myself the destroyer fight in the Channel on the night of April 20, two English destroyers, Swift and Broke, against six German destroyers, in the darkness of a black night; a five-minute battle, but those five minutes crowded full. Ramming, torpedoing, repelling boarders, fighting with pistols and cutlases and bayonets, responding to a treacherous call to save — it was all worthy of the times of Drake. Stir my imagination! I found myself starting forward and brandishing the hoe, my breath coming fast, and my eyes, I have no doubt, flashing fire. I laughed again. It was raining. It had been raining, I suppose, for five minutes at least, and I had not known it. I gathered up my tools, put them in the shed, and went into the house to change my clothes, and to consume my pint of milk, while my daughter, opposite me, consumed hers — and some other things besides.

After luncheon I put on my rubber boots and went out. It was still raining, a good hard drizzle from the southeast. It suited me well enough, and I wandered the shores all the afternoon, or stood in the shelter of a tree and looked out over the bay. I liked it. There is something soothing and at the same time stirring in such a day and such a place. There was a good heavy breeze, and the seas marched, and the sound of their breaking, and the fresh wet wind on my cheek, and the gray veil of rain over the rolling water, with not a sail or so much as a smudge of smoke in sight — well, it is hardly worth while to say how it affects me. Those who feel as I do will not need to be told, and for those who do not it would be useless. But man seems a little thing, and the affairs of man of no importance — absolutely none.

As the afternoon wore on, the drizzle became less and finally stopped, although it was still gray. And then the clouds began to break, and I wandered homeward along the shore, and I climbed the steep path, and sat me on the seat under my great pine, where I could see the water and the sun when he was ready to show his face. A long time I sat there, and I heard no sound from the harbor except the screams of the gulls, and no sound from the land except the sound of the wind blowing among the needles of the pine above my head. And at last the gulls were gone, and the sun peeped out from under the edge of the ragged and scudding cloud, and I felt a gentle touch upon my arm. And I turned my head and looked, and there was Pukkie; Pukkie, my little son, my well-beloved.

I put both arms around him, and I

hugged him shamelessly. I was glad to feel that he hugged me in turn, and hugged me hard. Usually I put my arm around him gently and surreptitiously, for I would not draw his attention to the act. I dread the time when he will shrink from my embraces; but that time does not seem to have come yet.

"Oh, Pukkie!" I cried. "My dear little son, where in the world did you come from?"

He laughed delightedly. "From school," he said; and he nestled against me.

"But how did you get here? Your mother went — but have you seen her? Where is she?"

He glanced up over my shoulder, and smiled. "Turn around, daddy."

And there came from over my

head a low ripple of laughter, and I looked up into Eve's lovely, smiling face. She slipped down upon the seat beside me, and I reached out for her hand, that was already reaching out for mine, and her fingers clasped mine close.

"My goodness, Eve," I said, "but I'm glad to have you back — and Pukkie."

"You're no gladder to have me than I am to get back. I don't ever want to go anywhere without you, Adam. But I've seen him — seen Joffre — and I waved with all my might, and I cried. I knew I should."

"And Pukkie?"

"Oh, father stopped for him on the way up. He said until the end of the year was too long to wait, and he'd bring him back in two days. The headmaster did n't want to let him go, but father generally has his way. And it began to rain, but we did n't mind."

"And when you saw Joffre you wept?"

"Not exactly. There was a young fellow standing in the crowd quietly, with his arm in a sling. He was hardly more than a boy, and he looked sick. He had beautiful sombre eyes, with a look in them that — well, as if he had seen so much, and as if he did not quite understand. You should have seen his eyes. Like a wild thing. And when Joffre came, I thought he would go crazy. He waved his cap frantically, and the tears just streamed out of his eyes, and you should have heard him. Joffre heard, and saw, and he leaned out of the car, and he saluted that boy. My! That boy was proud. You can guess — that was when I cried. And we got him into the car with us. He did n't look able to go far. He was a soldier who had been with the Canadians over there, a Frenchman by birth. He told us a little about it, but he did n't seem to want to talk. He had been wounded, and sick, and had come back over here on sick leave or something of the kind. And he and Lejeune, the chauffeur, got to talking, and we took him home. He wants to get back into the fighting as soon as he can. And when he got out, Lejeune got out too. He was going to enlist."

"Left you on the spot?"

Eve laughed. "Yes," she said, "but I rather guess that it was n't unexpected. I should n't be surprised if that was what father took him for. At any rate, father just smiled, and gave them both his blessing, and told Lejeune to come back when the war was over. And he gave him some money, and said that they could divide it between them."

"How much, I wonder?"

"I don't know how much, but a good deal, considerably more than a hundred dollars. He had a note already written, too, a 'character,' as the maids call it, saying that he was a good chauffeur. Then Tom — he had been getting uneasy — said that he wanted to be in on this too, but he was n't so well prepared as father. And he gave them all he had with him, except a dollar or two. That was too much for the French boy, and he waved his cap again, and cried, '*Vive* *la France! Vive l'Amérique!'* with the tears streaming down his face again. And I cried some more, and so did Cecily. Oh, I had a lovely time, Adam."

Eve was laughing again, and pressing closer to me. "That French boy was a machinist before he went to the war, and Lejeune is a good chauffeur, and I should n't wonder if they'd both get into driving when they get over there. I hope so. But he was n't thinking of that, the French boy. He is ready to go back, when his time comes, and meet his fate with a high heart. With a high heart, Adam. Oh," she cried, "don't you think it is stirring — just a little — to the imagination? Don't you?" And she gave me a little shake.

I nodded soberly, and hugged Pukkie closer. "I rejoice, Eve," I said irrelevantly, "that Pukkie is not yet eleven."

Eve did not reply directly. Her eyes filled with tears, and she drew Pukkie around between us. "I suppose it is selfish," she said. "If a French machinist goes — only about eight or nine years older than Pukkie — and can stir me all up with the idea of it — why —"

She did not finish, so I did not know what she would have asked. But I could guess.

"War is wicked," I said. "There is no novelty in that idea. But if a wicked war is started, it may be more wicked to keep out of it than to go in, and there may be more misery involved in keeping out than in going in. I don't know about this one, and

I don't believe that anybody knows. One thing I do know, and that is that wars will continue to occur at intervals as long as human nature is what it is. Man is a fighting animal. When he ceases to be, the time of his fall will have arrived. I have spoken."

Eve laughed merrily. "But you have not finished. Go on, oracle."

"No more from the oracle. Only a purely personal observation. I could go into the fighting with a sort of a titillation — an unholy joy in fighting for its own sake, quite apart from any feeling for any cause. I believe that that is the feeling which animates most men who volunteer to fight. Of course they choose their side from conviction. At least, it is to be hoped that they do. But as for the actual combat, there is a joy in the fight — why, that alone accounts for all our games, at bottom."

Eve was looking at me doubtfully. "But, Adam," she said slowly, "you don't mean to — you are n't going to —"

I shook my head. "I have no such intention. Make your mind easy. I have a dependent family. I don't know what you would do without my efforts to support you. It would be a terrible misfortune if you were cast upon your father's shoulders. You might starve."

Eve seemed to be amused. But Pukkie had been getting uneasy, and he began to squirm. Then he seized my arm.

"Look, daddy. See that big schooner. I never saw her before. What is it?"

I looked. A great white schooner was headed in, and she was almost at the entrance of the harbor. The wind had fallen light with the approach of the sun to his setting; the schooner had all her light sails set and came on fast. Suddenly the light sails began to come off, slacking down, wrinkling, and gathered in, and stowed, as a man would take off his coat. Before one was well in another would start slacking down, wrinkling, gathered in, and stowed, almost as fast as I tell it. That meant a big crew well trained. All her kites were stowed, and she began rounding into the wind, letting her jibs go as she came around. She shot a long way, but stopped at last, and her chain rattled out, and she began to drift astern. Then her foresail came down steadily, and before it was down, sailors swarmed out upon the footropes of the mainboom, and the great mainsail began to come down, slowly and steadily, gathered in as it came by the men upon the footropes. By the time all her chain was paid out, and she was finally at rest, all her sails were furled, and they were getting out the covers.

A shining mahogany launch was dropped into the water, run back to the gangway, and a girl ran lightly down the steps.

"Elizabeth Radnor," said Eve, wondering. "What can she be doing there?"

"Perhaps the owners take lessons in dancing," I suggested.

Eve smiled. "She gives lessons in swimming too," she said.

A man followed Miss Radnor. He seemed strangely familiar.

"Bobby!" cried Eve. "I think it's funny. I'm sure it's Bobby."

I was sure it was Bobby. It might be funny, but it was not strange. The launch made for Old Goodwin's landing at forty miles an hour.

IV

I LAY against the bank above my clam beds, with my hands clasped behind my head, and I gazed up at the whitish blue of the sky, and at the little floating clouds flecking the blue, and at an occasional herring gull flying across my field of vision with moderate wing-beats and with no apparent object, and at the procession of screaming terns busy at their fishing. For the terns have come, which always marks the change of season for me, but the winter gulls have not all gone. And I looked at the tree over my head, and I cast back over the years. I could see the tree merely by raising my eyes, without raising my head.

That tree has associations and a history: for under that tree Eve stood the fifth time that I saw her, — I remember each time, — and it was raining, a hard drizzle from the southeast, and the water dripped from her wide felt hat, and shone upon her long coat, and she was smiling. So that tree has associations for me — and for Eve as well, I believe. And sundry pairs of rubber boots have been hung in a crotch of it, both Eve's, and at a somewhat later time, Old Goodwin's; wherefore it has a history. And here, too, just where my head was pillowed, Eve had sat but a scant two hours after I had found her out, — I had thought she was a governess in Old Goodwin's house, — and she had set us both right for ever. And now there were many happy years behind us, and more happy years ahead of us, and there were Pukkie and Tidda; but most of all there was Eve.

So I lay and drank in the sunshine, and basked in its warmth, and my mind was a blank save for these pleasant musings. My poor little son! All of the Sunday that he was here — two days ago — it rained hard. He did not seem to mind it, but dragged me out in it — he had not such hard work to get me out. I like the wet well enough, but we have had a long stretch of cold and wet. But he got me out, and wandered the shore, clad in his rubber coat, and his rubber boots, and his little sou'wester, and he watched the white schooner; but on the schooner there was no sign of life save some sailors standing like statues in their dripping oilskins, and a man in a pea-jacket and faded old blue cap, who paced back and forth at the stern, or stood still by the rail for long periods, and then took up his pacing again. And Pukkie looked up at me and asked whether I thought he was the captain or the mate, and would have gone out there in one of Old Goodwin's boats, with me to help him row. But I refused. It is wet and uncomfortable rowing in a pouring rain; better standing.

And he would go up to his grandfather's in the hope of finding Bobby Leverett. So we went, and we found Bobby sitting on the piazza with the telescope and Miss Radnor; and Pukkie bearded Bobby in his chair, and asked him point-blank what he had been doing in that schooner. We had told Pukkie about the Rattlesnake, and Jimmy Wales and Ogilvie.

And Bobby grinned at my son, and answered him, if you call it an answer.

"Sorry not to be able to tell you, Puk, old chap," he said, "but you know we are enjoined not to publish information of the movements of vessels, and the plans of the navy are a dead secret. It might give information to the enemy." And he pointed at me.

"Do you know the plans of the navy?" asked Pukkie.

Bobby laughed, and so did Miss Radnor. "I refuse to answer," said Bobby, "on the ground that it would incriminate me. We may have been out baiting our traps. Ask your father about it."

"I don't believe the navy has any

plans," I said, "so far as you are concerned. They just want to make you think that you are busy."

"Treason!" Bobby cried loudly. "Treason! I'm afraid it's my duty to lay charges against you, Adam."

"And I," I retorted, "will expel you from membership in the Clam Beds Protective Company—if you persist."

"There!" said Miss Radnor. "How will you like that, Mr. Leverett?"

"I 'll have to give in," Bobby replied. "It 's a cruel and unusual punishment, and therefore unconstitutional, but Adam would n't mind a little thing like that. I am moved by the thought of Eve's grief, although you would n't think that a good sport like Eve would object to a traitor's taking off. I surrender, Adam. Be merciful."

Our noise had attracted Old Goodwin, and he joined us. And, thinking that Bobby might as well be left to the society of the telescope and Miss Radnor, we left him, we three, and betook ourselves to the shore. On the white schooner the man in the pea-jacket and old faded blue cap was still pacing back and forth by the rail, and Pukkie turned to his grandfather and asked him the question which I could not answer.

At that moment the man caught sight of Old Goodwin, and waved his arm, and Old Goodwin answered the wave.

"That is Captain Fergus, Pukkie. He's the captain. Some years ago he was captain of vessels that sailed the deep oceans."

My son was astonished. Captains

who sail the deep oceans command his unbounded respect. I inferred from his reply that skippers of yachts, even of great white schooner yachts, do not.

"Was he?" he said. "How does it happen that he is skippering a yacht then?"

Old Goodwin laughed his pleasant, quiet laugh.

"He owns the yacht — or he did. I think it likely that he gave up going to sea on account of his wife. He was married four or five years ago."

"Oh, his wife!" my son replied in accents of deep scorn. It was evidently incomprehensible to him that a man should give up such a delightful occupation for a mere wife.

Old Goodwin laughed again. "I'd take you out there if it were n't so wet. But never mind. She'll be in here again some time when you're at home."

Then we wandered the shores until the rain stopped and the sky was a mass of heavy gray clouds, but the sun did not come out; and Pukkie had to go in.

The next morning Pukkie found that the yacht had gone, and Old Goodwin took him back to school, alone with him in the great car. Pukkie did not mind going back. He has become acclimated at school, and he likes to ride with his grandfather, sitting in the front seat with all the clocks and meters and switches and the little lamps like eyes and the levers and pedals spread out before him. There is reason to suppose that Old Goodwin gets some pleasure out of it. That is why neither Eve nor I went. There is more pleasure for him when they two are alone. Old Goodwin and his grandson are great chums.

When I had got to this point in my ruminations, I realized that the great pebbles under me, although partly cushioned by sand and by the dried seaweed which had washed up among them, had been getting harder and harder. I moved, and groaned involuntarily, and sat up—and rubbed my eyes. There was the white schooner lying quietly at anchor, her sails all furled and covered, and no movement on her decks. She lay so still that she seemed immovable; as firmly fixed as the breakwater itself, or as the Long Stone, or as one of the distant islands, which swam high in a bluish haze and flickered in mirage.

I got up slowly, and heard a noise of a rolling pebble; and I turned, and there was Eve coming along the shore. I went to meet her, and we came back and sat upon the bank. And Eve looked up at me and smiled, and her hand went out slowly, and mine met it, and we put our clasped hands down between us.

"*Now* they can't see," said Eve. "Can they?"

I smiled and shook my head.

"And it would n't make any difference," Eve pursued, "if they could. Would it? Say quickly, Adam," she cried, shaking our clasped hands in mid air. "You are too slow. Would it?"

"No, Eve," I answered, smiling again. Indeed I had not stopped smiling. "But we might excite envy in their breasts, which is a sin we pray to be delivered from."

"Oh, well," she said, "there is nobody to see but Captain Fergus, and he has not been married long. I love this place, Adam. Do you remember — here were your pebbles, in the sod just here. And here I sat when you warned me not to spot my dress, — when I took you for a fisherman, — and you took me for a governess."

"Did you think I could forget?"

And we fell silent, and presently Eve would have me row her out upon the water, for it was as warm as summer. And, that pleasing me, — although it would have been enough for me that I was pleasing Eve, — we wandered to Old Goodwin's stone pier, and took one of his boats, and rowed out. And I paddled about, having nowhere in particular to go, and we found ourselves near the great white schooner, almost under her stern; and I looked up, and read her name, Arcadia, and there was Captain Fergus, in his faded old blue cap, looking down at us over the rail. His face was bronzed by sun and wind and rain, and there were little wrinkles about his eyes after the manner of your seafaring men, and his eyes were of a deep blue — the blue of the deep sea. They made me think of Old Goodwin's eyes, although Old Goodwin's eyes are not blue.

He touched his cap. "Won't you come aboard?" he asked in a deep voice which made one think of rolling seas and fresh winds and bellying sails.

"Thank you." I hesitated, and looked at Eve, but she did not wait for me.

"We shall be glad to," she said. And she turned to me. "Hurry, Adam, and row around to the ladder."

So I got us around to the steps, and there was a sailor with a boat-hook to hold the boat for us and to take charge of it, and Captain Fergus waiting at the gangway. And I introduced myself, but Eve did not wait for introductions, but smiled at him, and said that she thought he knew her father.

The wrinkles about Captain Fergus's pleasant eyes deepened.

"You are very like him," he said. And he led us over to the port side, toward some chairs from one of which had risen a slender woman, with a pleasant face and hair beginning to be well streaked with gray, but not many years older than Eve. Mrs. Fergus, I found, had been Marian Wafer; had been Miss Wafer for so long that she had become confirmed in the habit of spinsterhood, and did not find it easy to get out of that habit now that she was married.

We settled ourselves in the chairs, and had some pleasant, desultory talk; and the sun shone, not too brightly, through a bluish haze; there was hardly a breath of wind to ruffle the calm surface of the bay, and peace was on the face of the waters. The stillness almost seemed to drowse and to make a soft noise, like the distant sound of locusts in August. It soothed us, and the talk died, and we sat motionless and in silence, gazing out at the distant islands in their misty blue veils, or at two tiny sails, motionless too, two or three miles away, or, nearer yet, at an empty expanse of glassy water.

Suddenly a cat's-paw swept over the surface like a breath over a mirror, and the shining launch of the Arcadia shot out from Old Goodwin's landing, and came toward us at great speed; not at forty miles an hour, for the landing was not far off. She was towing an aquaplane, which stood very nearly perpendicular in the water, and I saw one man standing up and steering, and the heads of three or four people showing occasionally above the deck. The launch itself was at a pretty angle, with daylight showing under ten feet of her keel, and throwing cataracts out from either side like a fire engine; and she hid her passengers until she swerved. She was not bringing her passengers aboard the Arcadia, for she slackened speed and curved prettily, and drifted before us, almost within reach, and I saw that the people aboard of her, besides an officer and a sailor, were Old Goodwin and Elizabeth Radnor and another girl, a stranger. Miss Radnor and the stranger were clad in bathing-suits.

Eve did not seem as much surprised as I should have expected, and she smiled and spoke to her father and Miss Radnor, and he waved his hand; and the strange girl arose, stood poised for a moment on the rail, tossed her arms high above her head, dived overboard and struck out for the aquaplane. Miss Radnor instantly arose and followed, without bothering to poise, and they had a race for it. The strange girl swam well, but Miss Radnor had more power, and she gained.

Captain Fergus's great voice rang out. "Go it, Olivia! You're almost there. Once more and more power to you!"

And Olivia spurted, but got to laughing and lost a stroke; and Elizabeth Radnor caught her, but she got to laughing too, so that both seized their goal at the same instant. They drew themselves partly upon it, but the aquaplane sank under their weight, and the water swirled about their knees, for the launch was barely moving. But it began to surge ahead, faster and faster, so that the two girls found a firm support beneath their feet as they rose carefully. Olivia held two ropes fastened at the forward corners, and Miss Radnor steadied herself behind, with a hand on Olivia.

The launch twisted and turned, and made loops and circles and spirals, and Olivia still stood straight, like a Greek charioteer, holding the lines with hands and rigid arms that were beginning to ache; but Miss Radnor's knees were bending more and more, and she was swaying. And she laughed.

"Good-bye, Olivia," she said; and she dived sidewise, and came up again, and was swimming easily.

The launch stood in nearer to the schooner, and Olivia staggered as they turned; but she got her balance, and once more stood straight. And the launch began to twist and double and turn in loops and circles, faster and faster. Olivia stood upright for two or three turns, then she began to sway; and she saw that it was the beginning of the end, and she stooped quickly, and swung her arms low, then high above her head, and she gave a spring backward, and turned a half-somersault—and a little more.

"Good!" cried Captain Fergus. "A pretty backward dive! Olivia's a good swimmer — capital. Almost as good as Elizabeth." He turned to us. "Just wait until you see Elizabeth do some of her stunts. Have you ever seen her?"

I smiled and shook my head. "Miss Radnor seems an extremely competent person — in many ways."

Captain Fergus looked sharply at

me for an instant, then he chuckled as though there was a good joke somewhere within hail.

"So she is," he said; "so she is, very competent. She's an able seaman. Elizabeth's a great favorite of mine, rather more of a favorite than —"

"Dick!" said Mrs. Fergus warningly.

"Eh?" He turned to Mrs. Fergus, and smiled the smile that crinkled all about his pleasant eyes. His eyes smiled too, those eyes of deepest blue. "I was n't going to say anything imprudent, Marian, only that Elizabeth is rather more of a favorite than some others that I could name. Oh, I'm not going to call any names, Marian. You need n't be scared. Marian's always afraid," he said to Eve and me, "that I'm going to be indiscreet, and I've never in my life been indiscreet. Have I, Marian?"

Mrs. Fergus laughed. "How should I know? I've no doubt that you have been, many times. You are n't politic, Dick."

"Heaven save us!" said Captain Fergus under his breath. "I hope not. Neither are you, Marian. I don't know of anybody less politic than you."

Mrs. Fergus laughed again, merrily. "Richard was a sailor for so many years," she said, "that he can't get out of his sailor's ways."

"They are good ways," I said. "Don't you think so, Mrs. Fergus?"

"They are good ways," Mrs. Fergus repeated, looking at her husband, "and I like them." And Eve smiled across at me.

The launch had stopped her engine, and was waiting for the two girls. Elizabeth Radnor reached her first, a white arm shot out of the water and the hand grasped the gunwale, and Old Goodwin helped her aboard, and she stood on the deck and dripped. And Olivia came up on the other side, and Old Goodwin helped her aboard, but she did not stand on the deck to drip. She jumped into the cockpit, and dripped on the cushions.

"There!" Mrs. Fergus exclaimed. "If that is n't just like her to run streams of water on the cushions. Why could n't she do as Elizabeth does, and —"

"Does n't matter," Captain Fergus growled. "Cushions waterproof, and the sun 'll dry the top in five minutes."

Mrs. Fergus made a motion of impatience, and there was a slight compression of her lips.

"I know that it does n't really matter," she said, "a little thing like wetting the cushions — when they could have been kept dry just as easily. Elizabeth —"

"It really is n't any matter about the cushions," Captain Fergus interrupted gently. "Big crew doing nothing — they'll be set to work presently scrubbing the launch inside and out. What's a little water? Does n't hurt anything."

Mrs. Fergus laughed softly. "You 'd let them do anything, Dick, — stick pins into you —"

"If it would be any fun for them," said Captain Fergus gruffly, "I guess I could stand it. What's a pin anyway?"

Mrs. Fergus laughed again. "You 'd find out. But I was really thinking of the difference in the girls. Elizabeth is naturally considerate, Olivia is not. Olivia is a good swimmer, of course, and she is pretty and sweet and attractive, but she has done some outrageous things in the last three years. Nothing bad, but absolutely inconsiderate." She was talking to us now more than to her husband. "She swims so well that she jumps in — or she used to — whenever she feels like it, clothes and all. Why, she even took her mother's parasol in with her one day. It ruined the parasol, of course. She was all dressed up for a party, and had on a lovely dress, with a beautiful old ribbon sash, which was spoiled. Luckily her dress was a wash dress, but it had to be done up again, and the Greshams had no money to waste." She broke out in sudden laughter. "But it was funny, Dick, to see her swimming about, holding the parasol. Do you remember? At sixteen Olivia Gresham was just a pirate, and she is more or less of one at eighteen. Look at Jack Ogilvie and the way she treats him, and he as nice a boy as ever lived."

"You may look at Jack Ogilvie now," said Captain Fergus quietly, "if you will raise your eyes. There he comes."

Accordingly we raised our eyes, all of us, and we saw nothing but those two tiny sails that I have mentioned, almost in the same place in which they had been for the last half hour; and a motor-boat, almost hidden in the haze and very difficult to make out, seeming to be soaring over the tops of the waves toward us. It must have been five miles away.

"But, Dick," said Mrs. Fergus, "where is Jack? Is he —"

"In that motor-boat. Don't you see it? Head on."

He whistled shrilly. The launch had been lying idly before us, her engine stopped, and Miss Radnor sat upon the deck with her feet dangling over the side. At the whistle she glanced down the bay, then looked around at us and waved her hand. Then she simply straightened out and slipped into the water feet first, and disappeared.

"Captain Fergus," asked Eve, "how can you possibly tell who is in that boat? I can hardly see the boat."

He laughed. "I can't tell," he said, "of course, because I can't see any of her crew; but I know the boat, and Ogilvie should be in it."

"But how can you know the boat? One motor-boat looks much like another at that distance — to me."

"I don't know how, but I know the boat. How do you know your friends as far off as you can see them?"

And Eve laughed, and she went on marvelling. But Miss Radnor, who had disappeared so quietly, had not reappeared, and Mrs. Fergus seemed to be getting anxious. She looked at her husband.

"Dick," she began, "I wish Elizabeth would n't stay under so long. Where —"

At that moment a red cap bobbed up on the surface of the glassy water almost at the side of the yacht, and Miss Radnor laughed up at us. She swam to a boat swinging at the boom, climbed in and up the little rope ladder to the boom, and so on deck.

"Sorry," she called, "to drip on your deck, but I want to dive."

And she went up the rigging as far as she could go, which was not far — was not far enough, it seemed.

"You should have the mainsail up," she said. "I could go up on the rings. It is such a disappointment! I wanted to try it from the spreaders."

"I'll send you up in a sling." And forthwith two sailors came running, and unhooked a halliard from somewhere, and got out a boatswain's chair, and hooked it on, and she put her legs through, and they hoisted her up to the spreaders. She looked very small up there, as she held on to the spreader, and gingerly got herself out of the chair, and stood up, holding by the stay. And, still holding on carefully, she pulled on the halliard with her free hand, until the boatswain's chair was far enough down again to go down of its own weight. Then she edged out to the end of the spreader, and got her feet clear of the stay, though how she did it I could not imagine, holding on to the stay behind her back. But she did it, and I could see her moving her feet ever so slightly, to get the right grip. Then, suddenly she let go, and swung her arms up slowly, and shot outward in a beautiful swan dive that rivalled Annette Kellerman at her best; and she struck the water as straight as a pikestaff. There was not much spray when she struck. It reminded me of scaling stones in the way we used to call "cutting the devil's throat." Her slender body entered the water with much the same kind of a noise.

There was nothing shallow about that dive, for she did not come up for a long time. At last I saw a shadow in the water shooting slowly toward the launch, and the red cap came floating to the surface as if it were only a red rubber balloon; and a white arm shot out, and the hand grasped the gunwale, and again Old Goodwin helped her aboard, and she sat on the deck and dabbled her feet in the water, as she had before, but this time she sat beside Olivia. And Jack Ogilvie — if it was he — in his motor-boat was almost in. I could see the crew of the boat pretty well, and there was none among them who looked like Ogilvie, except the one in an ensign's uniform, and Ogilvie was not an ensign. Then the boat was abreast of the launch, and Elizabeth Radnor turned her head, and waved and called, and beckoned.

"Hello, Elizabeth!" the ensign called in return, and the boat began to turn. "Sorry I was n't nearer to see your dive, but I saw it pretty well. You could n't repeat it for my benefit, I suppose?"

Elizabeth laughed and shook her head. "Not to-day, Jack."

So Ogilvie was an ensign. Eve had noted that too.

"He must be twenty-one, Adam," she whispered, "and he must have had a birthday. I wish we had known it. I would have had a party for him."

"Is it too late?" I asked.

"I'll see about it," she answered, smiling. Eve likes Ogilvie.

But the motor-boat had stopped not far from the launch. They were near enough for us to hear pretty well over that quiet water. Ogilvie's crew tried not to show undue interest.

"Hello, Olivia," said Ogilvie, standing very straight. He looked rather wistful, I thought.

"Hello," she said, neither turning her head nor lifting her eyes. It was the essence of indifference. "What are you doing here?"

It was more than indifference. It was as if Ogilvie bored her. My gorge began to rise, and my color rose a little, I am afraid, and I moved my chair, so that Eve looked over at me.

I felt, I suppose, much as Captain Fergus did, when he said that Elizabeth was more of a favorite of his than some others.

Ogilvie seemed to be familiar with that attitude of Olivia's, for he smiled faintly, and stepped back.

"Nothing much," he said; "just cruising — cursing about the bay. Like Captain Cook, who went cursing about the Pacific Ocean. That's what you said in school, Olivia. Remember?"

"If I don't," Olivia flung back petulantly, "it is n't because I have n't been reminded of it."

Elizabeth raised her head and sent forth a merry peal of laughter.

"Oh, Olivia, did you really? When was it? Oh, that's too good to keep."

Olivia was picking at the deck of

the launch. There may have been a speck of dust there.

"I suppose I did. It was when I was very small, and the teacher asked me what Captain Cook did, and 'cruise' looked like 'curse' to me. But if you ever tell, Elizabeth," she flared out, "I'll never forgive you."

Once more Elizabeth's laughter rang out.

"Oh, Olivia! It won't be necessary for me to tell, but I'd almost be willing to be never forgiven." Then she heard Ogilvie give orders to start. "Wait, Jack. I can't do my dive over again, but Olivia and I will show you some aquaplaning. Won't we, Olivia?"

Olivia shook her head. "I don't believe I want to."

"Very well, then. I'll do it all by

myself. I see you've got it, Jack. Congratulations!"

At that Olivia looked up. "Got what? Oh, a new uniform. Captain Ogilvie, I suppose."

But Elizabeth had slid into the water, and Olivia slid in from the other side of the launch, and Ogilvie waited, but the launch did not. Elizabeth was swimming under water, as seemed to be her habit, and the launch had quite a little way on before the red cap emerged. She had heard it, of course, and had calculated very nicely, and came to the surface just as the aquaplane was going by; and she seized it and swung herself upon it, and landed standing on her feet. It was like the centre ring in a circus; and it made me think more and more of that centre ring, and of great white horses cantering around it, as Elizabeth went through the most extraordinary feats of agility and skill, diving off and jumping on again as it seemed with but a quirk of her wrist, making the aquaplane do the work for her. And to end the exhibition the launch, which had been doing a modest ten miles an hour, went up to twenty-five, and the aquaplane stood nearly straight, and bounced around, with sudden sidewise jumps and swerves and jerks. It was no longer the great white horse cantering around the ring, but a balky, bucking horse that gave Elizabeth some trouble. I could see how carefully she was balancing with bent knees that gave to every jump, and brought it back again. But when the launch began to twist and turn and loop she could not keep her balance for very long. She knew she could not, and before she had more than begun to lose it she laughed aloud, and she gave a spring straight up, and turned backward in the air, and entered the water behind the aquaplane, straight and true. As a backward dive it surpassed Olivia's as you would expect the finished performance of a professional acrobat to surpass the best attempts of an amateur.

In watching Elizabeth's performance I had entirely forgotten Olivia, and so had all the others, unless Ogilvie had not. I cannot speak for him. If he had forgotten he was quickly to be reminded, for suddenly about half a bucket of water shot up and drenched his cap and his new uniform.

He smiled quietly, and bent forward and looked into the mocking eyes of Olivia.

"Thank you, Olivia," he said, the water dripping from his cap and his coat. "Was that intended as a christening?"

Olivia made no reply, but turned and swam to the launch. Elizabeth was climbing aboard, and sat in her old place on the deck, her feet dangling.

"Was it a good show, Jack?"

"It was worthy of you, Elizabeth. I can't give any higher praise. Thank you very much. You have given me a great deal of pleasure. You are always giving other people pleasure. Good-bye."

And he waved his hand to the launch and then to us, and his motor-boat went on her business up the harbor, whatever that business was.

Captain Fergus looked after him thoughtfully.

"Now, I wonder," he remarked, "why he did n't come aboard. He ought to want to see me."

I had got up with him, and we were standing at the gangway. The launch came nosing around, with the two girls enveloped in raincoats. Olivia had recovered her spirits. She stood up, and saluted with a stiff finger.

"Here's a load of lumber for you, Captain Fergus," she said. "Will you have it aboard? Where will you have it stowed?"

Captain Fergus looked grimly at her, and shook his head slowly, but his eyes, looking out from the shadow of the shiny visor of his old blue cap, were pleasant and smiling and humorous. The little wrinkles about them deepened.

"Don't you know better," he growled sternly, "than to bring me wet lumber? I can't take it. You'll have to take it ashore and dry it."

"Aye, aye, sir," said Olivia; and she sat down, and I regret to say that she giggled.

I had gone down the steps, and I was regarding a red rubber cap and a dun-colored raincoat. The red cap was pulled well down over the ears, concealing entirely the colors of Eve's great beaver muff. I spoke.

"Miss Radnor," I said, "what have you done with Bobby?"

She looked up quickly, and her eyes met mine frankly. They — hers, not mine, my eyes being nothing to look at, only to see with; but hers — they were hazel, I should guess, and they were veiled mischief as they looked into mine.

"Bobby?" she asked. "Mr. Leverett? Oh, we transferred him yesterday. We took him down in the Arcadia. We'll take you some day soon."

I have no wish to be transferred. But I do not wonder that Bobby is much taken with Elizabeth Radnor.

V

TILLING the soil, if the man who tills be working alone, tends to reflection, — provided that man possesseth wherewith to reflect, — and it promotes straight and simple thinking, thoughts which may be straight and true or they may not; but the thoughts of the tiller of the soil are more likely to be straight and true than the thoughts of the same man riding in a motor-car or working on the twenty-fifth floor of an office building. If such a man be the president of the company it is one thing; he may be puffed up with the pride of a little brief authority or he may be the simple, true man that Old Goodwin is. His sense of the values of things must be warped and distorted unless he tills the soil at times or does something that is equivalent, like sailing the deep blue oceans, where there is so very little between him and the workings of nature; and I do not mean sailing as a passenger in an ocean steamer or a yacht, in which he will have as little to do with the workings of nature as he would in a great hotel.

In such a man the sense of values must be distorted nearly as much, though in a different way, as that of a man who sits at one of an interminable row of desks, on another floor of the same office building, from eight-thirty in the morning until five in the afternoon, with an hour for luncheon; and knows himself to be but a cog in a huge machine, a cog which can and will be replaced as soon as it gives a sign of running unsmoothly. What a dreadful thought that you are but a cog in a machine! How very dreadful it must be to realize that you are growing old and are still nothing but a cog! How pregnant of rebellions, little futile rebellions! And how it must tear the very soul of that man to know beforehand that his rebellions must be little and futile! I can understand that a man in that state would welcome death; that he would be stood up against a wall and shot rather than go back to that desk of the interminable row — number thirteen, it might be. But there is nobody to stand him up against a wall. They will have none of him. He is too old. Too old to be shot, although he may have fighting instincts stirring fiercely within him. So they take his son, it may be, and he goes back to his desk. There is no escape for him. They will not even let him die as a man should in these times. Life is a series of disappointments, and the last is the most bitter. Hope takes herself away until he can hardly see her through the fog.

I was thinking such thoughts as these, leaning on my hoe. I had come out early to work in my garden, and I would start the planting of a row, and the next thing I knew I would find myself standing — or squatting, in accordance with my most recent activity — and gazing out over the waters of the bay, dreaming and musing of the bitterness of disappointment, or of little souls clothed with authority, or of Old

Goodwin, and of men like him — if there are such. Old Goodwin's is not a little soul. The first time that I thought on such things and lost myself in thinking, I was using my wheel hoe on the ground between the rows of corn and peas and beans. A wheel hoe is not a thing to lean on, but it fails you when you most need its support, and gives way under you and brings your thoughts to earth with a thump — and you as well, if you are not used to its vagaries and careful. So I took my hand hoe. It is friendly and will bear me up.

It was the twenty-sixth of May, and I had much planting to do, but I did not do it. I thought upon what had happened in the past few days, and I worked my wheel hoe. Wheel-hoeing does not interfere with my thinking. I believe I could do it in my sleep. I have only to walk along slowly, and to work my arms back and forth at every step, and unless the ground is very hard I can think perfectly. My corn showed as little yellowish-green tubes about an inch and a half long, just poked through a couple of days before, it was so cold early in the month; and it has not come up well. As I ran the hoe along beside the row, it was a rank of soldiers — soldiers of the first line. There were great gaps in the line. There have been many gaps, and there will be many more. It has not chanced to hit any friends of mine yet, but it will.

Then I thought upon the report of ten days before, that seven German submarines had been destroyed at sea on their way over here. It was gratifying to know that they had been destroyed, but the report was strangely disquieting to me. If they had sent a fleet of seven, they might send as many more. There was food for thought in that. I had seen no further mention of the matter in the papers, and most probably the report was untrue, but it set me thinking, and I wondered whether the information would not be considered of value to the enemy. If no report of their destruction had been published, Germany might not have known of it for weeks. Weeks of freedom for us knocked in the head by the newspapers.

And I was through with the corn, and had come to the beans, strange grotesque, misshapen things, pushing out of the ground like toads. Some of them were not through yet, but were raising great clods of earth, leaving holes which looked for all the world like toad-holes. There were two that looked like sinking ships. And I thought upon the report of a great naval battle, with many of our ships sunk. I do not believe it. In fact, I have heard vaguely of a denial by our Navy Department. And my eye was caught by a flash of scarlet near some trees by my wall, and there was a tanager. I stopped my hoeing and stood still and watched. It is some years since I have seen a tanager. He flew about in little short flights, aimlessly it seemed, from one low branch to another, then upon the ground, then back to a tree again, paying no attention to me standing like a scarecrow in my garden. Then he perched high and sang his cheerful song, very like a robin's. If I were not noticing nor thinking about it, I might think it a robin's — if I gave it a thought. I have heard that tanagers have been seen this spring in places where they have never been seen before. I have never seen one here, and I hoped this one would stay.

And then that talking machine of my neighbor's began reciting something in a loud voice — "Cohen at the telephone" or some such thing — and my tanager flew away, and I went savagely to my hoeing again. And I thought again of that obsolescent man who is too old to be shot, but not too old to be condemned to a ball and chain; and whose son they have taken while they have scornfully rejected him. And he would fight if they would let him. How he would fight! For there is nothing left for him but to choose the best death he can get. He may not be free even to do that. The father of Jack Ogilvie may be just such a man. I stopped again, and stood holding the handles of my hoe and looking off to sea, and thought of Ogilvie and Bobby and Jimmy Wales going to and fro upon the waters seeking that which is not.

I grasped my hoe handles more tightly, and turned my head, and looked at the dirt before me, and pushed my hoe savagely. What care I how they go to and fro upon the waters? I wander the shores, and I dig my clams, and I am content. But am I? And as I had got to this point in my meditations, from my neighbor's window came the rich voice of Harry Lauder singing "Breakfast in bed on Sunday morning." I smiled to myself — there was nobody to see me if I chose to smile at an absurdity — and my hoe went more and more slowly, for there was no power behind it. And I listened shamelessly to Harry Lauder's last whisper and his last mellow laugh, so that I did not hear the light steps behind me; but I heard the voice that I loved.

"Adam! Adam!" said the voice, chiding. "Listening to Harry Lauder — and enjoying it! Take shame to yourself."

And I turned, and saw Eve, and Tidda with her. Eve was smiling, and I smiled back at her.

"Surely, Eve," I said, "a man may

rest when he is weary. And if my neighbor choose to have a talking machine spouting out of his window, I cannot stop him. I wish I could. Imagine Judson with a talking machine!"

"I can imagine it very easily. The dear old man would have enjoyed it, I am sure. And if it gives them pleasure, Adam — why, some of the things give you pleasure. You need n't try to deny it."

"I don't, Eve. I deny nothing. But some of the things are —"

Eve nodded. "Yes," she said, "some of them certainly are. But they need n't bother you much."

At that moment we heard a giggle from somewhere on the other side of the wall, and something came whizzing. It was nothing but an old rotten piece of wood, and it fell short, but it stirred Tidda.

"I'm going after that Sands girl," she cried. "She shan't fire old pieces of wood at us." And she set off at top speed straight for the wall. Tidda is not becoming obsolescent.

I would have stopped her.

"No," Eve said. "Let her go. It can't do any harm." She dismissed the matter from her mind. "Tell me, Adam, what made you so savage as we were coming up. What were you thinking about?"

I laughed rather shamefacedly. "It was of no consequence, Eve. I was thinking that life, for some people, is just one disappointment after another." I must remember that Eve has pacifist tendencies.

Eve looked up at me with sober eyes.

"Were you thinking of anything in particular?"

"Of the unimportant men in a great office with long rows of desks and endless routine; especially of men who are growing old in it and can see no escape. I was thinking of the same thing, I remember, on Wednesday, down on the shore. It was a driving drizzle from the northeast, and gray, with rolling seas. It made the round of an office seem so futile and so useless. I envied Jimmy and Bobby and Ogilvie, off on patrol. I would have liked to be on patrol myself."

"Would you?" asked Eve. There was speculation in her eyes — and something else that I had seen there before. I could not fathom it. "How many of the men in the office — the men who are growing old — would exchange the comforts of the office for a driving drizzle out of the northeast, and gray and rolling seas — and a motor-boat? Not one in ten."

"It was that one I was thinking of."

Eve looked away from me and nodded slowly.

"Can't you leave your gardening? Come and sit down."

So I left my tools in the field, as a poor farmer leaves his tools where he has last used them in the fall, the plough beside the furrow, and the mowing-machine and the horserake at the edge of the meadow; and in the spring he is sorrowful, and wonders and bemoans the winter. And Eve took my hand in hers, and we went to my great pine and sat us down upon the bench. And, behind us, came Tidda over the wall, dragging the reluctant Sands girl, who giggled and held back; and they sat by the hole that is scooped in the ground and lined with great stones, for they would play at having a clambake. The chatter of our daughter's tongue was like an accompaniment; and nobody pays any attention to an accompaniment.

"Now, Adam," said Eve, "for the important business. You know we decided that Jack Ogilvie must have had a birthday, or he would not have got his commission. I have been making inquiries. He did; and I find that everybody can come next Saturday, probably, — a week from to-day."

Eve looked thoughtful and counted up on her fingers, which I released for the purpose — "the second of June.

Do you think, Adam," she went on, "that clams will be ripe on the second of June?"

I laughed. "We can see. But many things will be lacking which belong to a clambake. Do you want me to issue a call to the Clam Beds Protective Company?"

"Oh, yes, Adam. How will it run? To assemble, at their armory, — that is the bank above the clam beds, — in uniform, with arms and accoutrements, an hour before low tide. When will that be? But never mind. And shall I tell father?" She glanced toward the hole scooped in the ground. "He will be glad to — but mercy on us, Adam, where is Tidda?"

She sighed and started to her feet. I laughed, and pointed along the shore.

"Stole away," I said. Tidda and the Sands girl were picking their way among the great pebbles of the shore, Tidda with light feet skipping from pebble to pebble, the Sands girl going more cautiously and clumsily.

Eve sighed again. "We may as well follow. There is no knowing what they will be up to next."

So I rose and we turned to follow, and there was Elizabeth Radnor not ten steps away, smiling and regarding us with friendly eyes. As she drew near her eyes looked gray-green, not hazel, calm and humorous and knowing. Perhaps they are of the changeable kind. I have seen changeable eyes before. I would like to know what thoughts lie behind those eyes to give them their peculiar light. And at a guess I think that Bobby would give something to know. But they were friendly eyes, and they gave you a look that was straight and true.

"Oh, Elizabeth," — Eve has got that far with her, which is in her favor. I have never yet known Eve to be deceived in people — "Oh, Elizabeth, we have to go after Tidda, just along the shore. Will you come? Tidda leads us a chase. Her spirit of adventure will lead her into trouble."

Elizabeth laughed. We were descending the steep path to the shore.

"I'm afraid I had a spirit of adventure as great as Tidda's," she said; "fortunately no disaster happened to me, although I must have been rather a trial to my mother. And as to going into the water when I should n't — why, I was in the water all the time — whenever I could get in. You see the unhappy result. We were poor, you know; in what is called straitened circumstances. My father died when I was a little tot, and we never had a maid until a few years ago. You go on in your own way. It is pretty sure to be right."

I do not know whether Eve thought Elizabeth was referring to the path, but she turned and began to descend again.

"I'm glad you think so," she flung back over her shoulder, "but I am not so sure. I really think that it would be better for Tidda if she were left more to her own devices — she has plenty — but I just can't do it."

We had got down to the shore, and Elizabeth turned to me.

"I am always saying things," she said, "that I don't mean. It is one of the results of too much freedom."

"So am I," I replied, "and this is one of them."

And Elizabeth looked at me queerly, and laughed suddenly, and looked away. I wondered if she understood. I wondered further about her. A reputation for unconsidered speech is the best of protections for secrets. I did not believe that she was generally guilty of unconsidered speech. And we had come to the clam beds, but the bank was too wet to sit on, and we stood around until I found some stones that were dry, and we sat on the stones in a row, like three crows. Eve said nothing to Tidda and the Sands girl, but watched them as they pulled off their stockings. And, Tidda having trouble with hers, as usual, Eve got up from her stone and helped her.

While Eve was busy with stockings, I spoke.

"Miss Radnor," I said, "what —"

She was gazing fixedly at the water over the clam beds — there was about a foot of it — and her thoughts were far away. But at the sound of her name she started almost imperceptibly, and looked at me, and smiled.

"My name is Elizabeth," she said, interrupting. "Perhaps you did n't know it. Yes, that is a hint."

Her eyes were like deep pools under a summer sun, and all sorts of colors played over them, flashing and sparkling gently and merrily, so that there was no telling what depths lay beneath, or what in the depths—except humor. They seemed to be looking always for a joke, and usually finding one too good to tell. What else they were looking for I did not know, but there was something.

"Thank you," I replied. "I take hints on occasion. And my name is Adam. That is a hint too. If you can reconcile the use of it with the respect due to age, — to a man too old to fight, — I shall be glad. It is a very old name and quite respectable."

She nodded and laughed. "Thank you, Adam. But you were going to ask me something."

"I was going to ask you, Elizabeth, if you know what has become of Bobby. We have n't seen him for a long time."

The pools flashed and sparkled once more. "Why do you ask me? Am I Bobby's keeper?"

"You seemed to be. And you transferred him, and we have n't seen him since."

"Captain Fergus transferred him. I have no doubt that he will turn up in time."

Eve had finished with the stockings, and she came and sat down again upon her stone, while the children splashed noisily into that foot of water. Tidda had a stout stick, and she began immediately to poke about with it.

"Who will turn up in time?" asked Eve. "What are you talking about?"

"Bobby," I answered. "I wish I could share Elizabeth's faith. I must notify Bobby."

"I think you will have an opportunity," said Elizabeth, "if you have a little patience."

"I will notify you meanwhile, Elizabeth. The Clam Beds Protective Company meets here next Saturday at nine o'clock. In uniform, with arms and equipment. If you lack anything, speak to Eve. I'm sorry to make it quite so early, but the tide, you know — and Eve has set the day."

"I'm going to have a birthday party for Jack Ogilvie, Elizabeth. It's a little late, but I did n't know in time, and Jimmy and Bobby and Ogilvie can come then, I think. I wish you'd tell me something more about him."

"About Jack? What shall I tell you? I've known him always, since he was knee-high to a grasshopper. He's as good as there is made. His family are nice people, with a very moderate income, just about enough to keep them going, and not enough to put him through college, although they would be willing to sacrifice a good deal to do it. But Jack prefers to put himself through, and he was doing it very well until he went into the navy. He has been preparing for that for a year or more. He does n't make nearly as much in the navy, even as an ensign — but I don't know about that. I guess he does. An ensign's pay is pretty good for a boy of twenty-one."

"And his father," Eve pursued; "what does he do? Is he in some great office, grinding away for Jack?"

Elizabeth smiled again. "No. He is a country doctor, and a very good one. I don't know what the town would do without him. But a country doctor, you know, can't make much."

"I'm glad," said Eve.

"Why? Because he can't make much?"

Eve laughed. "Glad that he's a doctor. I wish I could manage to swell his income."

Tidda and the Sands girl had been pursuing the elusive clam with some success. Tidda's hands were full of clams which she had dug out with the stick and her hands, burrowing into the sand and mud under the water, and her skirt was wet, and her sleeves were wet nearly to the shoulder. I called Eve's attention to that fact as she splashed out, ran to the bank, and deposited her clams in an old rusty tin can with jagged edges, which she drew from some hiding place evidently in familiar use. She must have done that same thing many times, and this was the first that we knew of it.

Eve glanced up and smiled.

"Never mind, Adam. Let them have their fun. I'll put dry clothes on her when we get home." Then she turned again to Elizabeth. "And Olivia," she said, "is —"

"I think," said Elizabeth, interrupting, "that Olivia is coming now."

As she spoke there was a slight rustling in the path through the greenery, and Olivia emerged upon the edge of the bank. She was stepping lightly, diffident and hesitating, a hand over her heart. It was like a young doe coming out of the woods.

"Oh!" she said. "I beg your pardon."

And Elizabeth laughed silently, mostly with her eyes; but Eve rose and went to meet Olivia.

"What's the joke, Elizabeth?" I asked in her ear. "Tell me, won't you?"

She turned merry eyes to mine. "Olivia's the joke," she said. "I can't explain, but if you knew her as well as I do —"

She did not finish, for Eve was speaking.

"We were just thinking of you, Olivia."

"How very nice of you! May I come?"

She advanced — still with that diffident and hesitating step like a doe's. I got up and offered her my stone.

Olivia looked startled; but Olivia

had a way of looking startled, so it seemed.

"Oh," she protested, "oh, I don't want to take your seat."

"Don't feel that you are putting me to an inconvenience," I said. "That stone is harder than it was. I am sorry that we can offer you nothing better than a stone, but it is all we have."

And Olivia laughed politely, and took my stone, and looked about.

"Clams!" she cried. "I have dug clams."

"Many?" I asked.

Olivia looked up at me and laughed again. "Oh, a good many," she replied, "in all sorts of places; and baked them too."

"A recruit for our company," I said, looking at Elizabeth and Eve.

"Will you join the company?" I asked Olivia.

"I shall be glad to," she answered. "What is it?"

And Eve laughed, and I explained, and Olivia seemed delighted. But Elizabeth was more amused than ever.

"What is it now, Elizabeth?"

"Olivia knows," said she.

"Elizabeth!" Olivia cried from her stone. "I did n't either come for —"

She stopped suddenly, her hand over her mouth.

"If she came for that purpose, Elizabeth," I said, "she is to be commended. Do you think that Captain Fergus and Mrs. Fergus would join? Would you speak to them about it?"

And Elizabeth signified that she

would, and there was other noise in the path through the greenery, a noise which was something more than a rustling, and Old Goodwin appeared, and behind him came Bobby. When Bobby appeared, I looked hard at Elizabeth, but I could detect no sign of confusion. She is so sunburned and tanned that a flush would not show anyway.

"What did you tell me about Bobby, Elizabeth?"

She looked up. "I don't remember. Nothing that was n't true."

Her eyes were filled with light, but she veiled them quickly, and Bobby wandered over to us. Old Goodwin had sat him down on the bank, and Tidda had put into his hands some more clams dripping mud, and was asking his advice, her elbows on his knees; and he listened soberly and with interest.

Eve told Bobby of the meeting of our company for the next week and the party.

He turned to me. "Does n't that notice have to be in writing?" he asked.

I shook my head. "You'd better accept it. The whole company will turn out. It's to be a party for Ogilvie — birthday party."

And Olivia pricked up her ears at that, and listened shamelessly while Eve told Bobby about it.

"That's very good of you, Eve," he said, when she had finished. "I'll tell Jimmy, and I'll get word to Ogilvie. We can come unless something turns up. Something may turn up, you know, at any minute. We never know. If a fleet of submarines should get over here, and should start getting caught in our traps we'd have to go."

"Traps all set, Bobby?" I asked.

"Set but not baited," he replied. "I'm looking for bait now, likely-looking little pigs, Adam, and for somebody to feed 'em, and keep 'em squealing. It would be interesting work, and a pleasant sail every day. If you were really patriotic you'd be glad to do that much for your country. But you won't. I see it in your eye. I'll have to do it myself."

And he heaved a prodigious sigh, and turned to Elizabeth and Olivia, and he began to talk lightly with them; and Olivia's face was all eagerness and light and gentleness. She was beautiful so. Bobby noticed it, and smiled at her, and talked to her for a minute or so, and she listened in a sort of silent rapture, which Elizabeth observed. And Bobby, glancing at Elizabeth, saw the changing light in those two deep pools, and saw her half-smile of amusement, and forgot what he was saying to Olivia, and stopped.

"You know, Miss Radnor," he said, forgetting the rest of us, "I have to go in half an hour." It was a sort of challenge.

She nodded, still smiling that half-smile of amusement. "I know."

"Well?"

Thereupon Eve rose quietly from her stone, and dragged Olivia up from hers, much against her will, and they wandered off to see the children at their clamming; but she gave me a significant look as she went. So I obediently drifted off along the shore. I was sorry to go, for I would have liked to hear what followed. And I drifted back again, and to and fro, like a shadow, but always Bobby was talking earnestly to Elizabeth, and Elizabeth looked up at Bobby, and laughed and shook her head. And at last Elizabeth rose, and they two wandered off down the shore toward Old Goodwin's stone pier. I caught a word or two of Bobby's as they went. I thought he was asking her what she was. "What are you?" was all I heard; and she replied, very probably, that she was a teacher of swimming and dancing. And she turned and waved her hand to us, and they were gone.

Then Eve stirred, and called Tidda, who came hugging close her old tin can dripping mud down upon her dress. Olivia was already on the path to the great house, but Old Goodwin turned back.

"Adam," he said, smiling, "I have retired from business. I thought you might like to know. It seemed as good a time as any."

It was what I have been urging upon him these ten years.

"There will be enough to keep me occupied," he added, answering my unspoken question. "A matter that I have in mind. I will tell you about it soon."

And he turned again, and was gone up the path.

I walked with Eve along the shore, and I wondered. I must have been mistaken in those words of Bobby's. How could he have asked her that?

VI

ON that second day of June it befell that I was stirring early, and I was out at dawn, for I had much to do; but I did not do it then, as I had meant. When I was come out into the fresh breath of morning, and was walking over the dewy grass to my shed, of a sudden my soul was drenched with the sense of a great truth, even as my feet and legs were drenched with dew. And the truth was this: All work is useless. It is but a waste of time that might be better spent in watching the sun come up through the mists of morning to rule over his kingdom; or in seeing him sink behind the bearded hills in the golden haze of evening. At either time the old earth is at peace, and the waters stilled or just waking, but the dawn is the better. I would contemplate the majesty of the sunrise and consider upon it. It restoreth my soul.

So my cares slipped from off my shoulders as a garment, and I turned my steps to the steep path, and came to the shore, and over the sand and pebbles to my clam beds at the point; and I hurried, for I would not miss the rising of the sun. But I did miss it, and saw the sun shining through a thick haze, with his lower edge just risen out of the sea. The tide was high, and the waters whispered gently at my feet, and stretched away in all manner of opalescent colors until, toward the south, they were lost in a tender pearl-gray that seemed to cover everything.

One needs to be alone at such a time; alone or with one other. And Eve had not divined my intention any more than I had, but she had been sleeping sweetly, with one white arm curved above her head upon the pillow, and she had smiled in her sleep, and I had withdrawn cautiously and quietly. She supposed that I would be working at my preparations. Working! And I laughed silently to myself. But I wished that I had known what I should do. Perhaps she would not have minded being waked.

So I stood there, scarcely moving, looking out into that tender pearl-gray, until the sun was half an hour high or more. Some of the magic was gone, and I knew that it was to be hot; hot and moist and sticky. And a fisherman crawled out into the bay, and then another, their sails hanging in wrinkles. They were not afraid of submarines. Who could be afraid of submarines in that quiet, opalescent water, that pearl-gray haze? Submarines there!

I laughed and turned away. Work no longer seemed so useless a waste of time. I must be at mine. There are many things to be seen to besides the digging of clams. I marched back along the shore, and up the path, and through the wet grass. The grass must be cut. Usually I keep it cut, but there is a dearth this year of men who work by the day, and I can get no man to help me. What is done I shall have to do myself.

So I came to the hole scooped in the ground just without the shadow of my pine, and I cleared it out, the accumulation of the winter, down to the lining of great stones. And I brought out the plain wooden benches, and the great pine planks laid on wooden horses, to serve as tables, and I set them in their places, and I rubbed the tops of the tables till they were all shining white. And a big wagon came with a load of seaweed—rockweed—all fresh and wet and dripping, its little brown bladders soft and swollen, and the load of wet weed was dumped in a slippery pile. There were chickens also to come, and lobsters, and fish, whatever kinds the fishermen brought in, but no bluefish caught in the bay these many years; and many loaves of brown bread. But all those things would come later, and I had no concern with them save to bake them — but not the brown bread. So I looked about, and seeing all things done that were to do at that time, I went in to breakfast.

I was restless, and dragged Eve out, and we went prowling along the shore, although it yet lacked an hour of the time set for the assembling of our company; but there was Old Goodwin leaning against a tree above the clam beds, gazing out over the water.

I followed his gaze, and I saw his ocean steamer lying there, at anchor. She had come in since sunrise, for the water then had been empty of steam yachts. And men were swarming over her rail and were getting settled upon stagings — planks — that hung there.

Old Goodwin turned to us. "Good-morning," he said, smiling his quiet smile of peace.

"Good-morning," I returned. "It seems like afternoon to me. It is a long time since sunrise. Your boat was n't there then. What are they doing to her? Painting a gold band around her?"

He smiled once more. "No gold," he said. "She needed paint. I thought that gray would be a good color. It wears well, and does n't show bruises."

"He has given her to the navy," Eve whispered. Her eyes were shining.

"I thought I might as well," said Old Goodwin as if apologizing. "I have given up New York — for a time anyway — and shall not need her.

That is the matter I spoke of. I shall want your advice, Adam."

"Now?" I asked. "It is rather sudden."

He laughed. "Not now. There is hardly time. There comes the Arcadia."

I had seen her looming through the haze. She seemed to be coming rapidly, and there was little wind. I mentioned it.

"Fergus had a motor put in her this year," Old Goodwin answered. "He hated to. Said it was spoiling a beautiful boat, but he had to do it."

Then there was a noise up the path, and Tom Ellis appeared with Cecily.

"Hello, people," he said. "Are we the first? I was afraid we would be, but I could n't hold Cecily any longer."

Cecily smiled. "Don't take any notice of him, Eve, and he'll run down pretty soon."

"And," Tom went on, "Cecily could have painted for another half hour and earned fifty dollars more. You see what a sacrifice I have made for you."

"And your country."

"Country comes first, does n't it, Adam? Ought to, but I'm afraid the clams had a good deal to do with it. What do you think of my uniform?"

Tom had on the worst looking clothes that I have ever seen on a respectable man who did no work. They were soaked with a mixture of oil and grease and dirt, and spattered with mud, which covered them in great patches here and there, and one sleeve of his coat was torn nearly off. It looked as if a machinist, in his oily jumper, had rolled in wet clay. His rubber boots were those of a mixer of mortar and concrete.

"I am lost in admiration, Tom," I said. "The others will hardly be able to equal that."

"No," Tom returned proudly; and he threw down his rake. He had brought an instrument very like a potato digger, a short-handled rake with huge tines. "The only private, you know. I thought my uniform ought to have distinction. Cleaned up Mr. Goodwin's cars for the purpose." Old Goodwin laughed suddenly at that. "Then I whitewashed the henhouse, with this artistic result. It's quite fun whitewashing henhouses. Ever try it, Adam? Did it with a pump and hose. Whitewash on the windows is an inch thick."

I laughed. "I have had that pleasure in the distant past, and I don't want any more of it. But you have not accounted for the mud."

Tom surveyed the mud and shook his head.

"Can't account for it," he said. "Have n't been near any mud. I can't imagine how it got there, unless Cecily borrowed the clothes. But this party, Adam, is a sort of farewell party for me. I've enlisted. I go to-morrow."

"Go to-morrow!" I cried. "Where? And what have you enlisted for?"

"That is somewhat ambiguous as a question, but I will answer all its meanings. I've enlisted because my country needs me. All the posters say so. That one of the old gentleman in the star-spangled hat looking right at you and pointing right at you, and saying, 'Your country needs YOU,' or words to that effect, was what got me finally. I could n't get away from it. He was pointing at me and looking at me, wherever I went. And I've enlisted for four years, and —"

"Four *years!*" gasped Cecily, wide-eyed. "You never told me that, Tom."

"Did n't I? It must have been an oversight, Cecily. You won't mind, will you? And I've enlisted to go to Newport and drive some admiral or other around in a large gray car. Oh, it's not half bad. When the submarines begin to school off Nantucket, perhaps they'll let me go out there once in a while and get a load."

"Tom," said Eve, patting his arm, her eyes shining again, "I think it's splendid. I could kiss you for it."

"Wait, Eve, until Cecily's not around," Tom whispered; "and perhaps Adam could be spared. *Then*, if you like —"

"I'm going to Newport to-morrow," Cecily broke in decidedly. "I 'm going to *live* there."

"Oh, I say!" said Tom. And Old Goodwin offered to take them both over next day in his new car, and let Tom drive. And he offered further to ferry Cecily back and forth as often as she liked, and to lend them a car if they wished.

So everybody was happy, — excepting perhaps Tom and Cecily, — and the Arcadia was just rounding to her anchorage, and we watched while the shining mahogany launch put off. But, before coming in, the launch went slowly along the whole length of Old Goodwin's ocean steamer. I could see Captain Fergus looking at the work as though he were inspecting it, and once he boomed forth a question, which was answered as if he had a right to ask it, and then the launch made for the landing.

I wondered at it, but I wondered more at Eve. For Eve has pacifist leanings, as I have reason to know and as I have said before; and here she was with all the signs of approval for Tom's action, and ready to kiss him for it. It might be that Eve was entirely willing that the war should be fought vicariously, and that she would sacrifice all her friends in the cause — but not her family. That was not like Eve. I refused to believe it of her. And I turned away and was musing upon this matter when there came down the path Captain Fergus and Mrs. Fergus, and Jimmy Wales and Bobby and Ogilvie; and, some distance behind them, Elizabeth and Olivia. And that was strange, too, that those two girls should be coming by themselves when Bobby and Jack Ogilvie were just ahead; but I could not be bothering myself about all the queer things that people did — or did not do. They did not concern me. There were enough things that did concern me to bother about.

All the company were there. I drew near to Eve.

"If Alice Carbonnel were here now," I said, "and Harrison, we should be complete."

"Alice!" Eve returned. "I wish that I knew!"

Alice Carbonnel was in Belgium, the last we knew, and Harrison Rindge, her husband, was hunting for her. I hope he has found her — safe. We are very fond of Alice Carbonnel, Eve and I.

"There is somebody else to come, Adam," said Eve. "You would never guess. It is my mother."

I smiled, remembering another day when I had met Eve just at that spot to take her to another clambake; a smoking dome upon a point, beneath a pine.

The point and the pine belonged to a queer fellow that I knew — knew well, I thought sometimes, and sometimes not.

And so I smiled, remembering.

"Eve," I said, "do governesses have mothers?"

And she smiled too, and she slipped her hand within my arm, and looked up at me with that light in her eyes that makes them pass all wonders.

"Oh, Adam," she said, "that was a happy day — for me. Oh, but it was hard, and I was afraid."

"A happier day for me," I said, pressing her arm close to my side. "But here comes your mother."

And Mrs. Goodwin came sailing down the path, with our little daughter skipping beside her, and she smiled as she came, which was not what she had been used to do in that time that I remembered. And our company being all assembled, and the beds being uncovered, although the tide was not yet at its lowest, I gave the order to dig. So we dug, even Mrs. Goodwin digging three clams, and she was not clad as a clammer should be clad, but she had some rubber boots, new ones and thin as gossamer, which a clamshell cut through. And thereafter she sat upon the bank and cheered us on, and gibed at our raiment; as if the body were not more than raiment.

We dug for an hour, and got clams enough for a regiment. All the baskets were filled to overflowing. And we stopped digging, one by one, and straightened our backs slowly, with many creaks and groans, and we drifted to the bank and in and out; and when the drifting process was over, I found myself next to Eve, with Elizabeth on the other side of her, and Ogilvie completing the circle. Bobby stood afar off, looking out over the water as if he were seeing his best friend swallowed by a submarine; and Olivia watched him from a distance.

"I notice, Jack," Elizabeth observed, "that Olivia has a lonesome look."

Ogilvie turned and looked, and turned back again and smiled.

"She has, has n't she? Bobby too."

Elizabeth never quivered. "Don't you want to relieve her loneliness?"

He shook his head. "*I* could n't relieve it. I told you. I'll try later — her last chance."

Elizabeth laughed. I was picking up a bushel basket filled with clams. Clams are a heavy fruit. Ogilvie seized one handle.

"Here!" cried Elizabeth. "I'm going to take that side. I want to help

Adam. You go with Eve, Jack. She has something for you to carry."

Ogilvie protested, and so did I, but she was firm.

"I want to go with you, Adam. You need n't think I can't carry my side, for I can."

So we set off, Eve and Jack Ogilvie with a market basket of clams and various hoes, and Elizabeth and I carrying that bushel of clams between us. Elizabeth was strong, I found, and sure-footed; surer than I. The others came straggling after, carrying their loads.

"Elizabeth," I began, "what is the matter with Bobby?"

She smiled and turned to observe Bobby. "I'm sure I don't know. He seems to be well occupied with Olivia." Then she changed suddenly.

"That was not honest, Adam," she said. "I do know, but it is nothing that I can help. He will get over it in time — perhaps. I wish he would, for it is not amusing as it is."

And she sighed softly, and then she smiled up at me. It was a brave attempt, and almost a success.

"And Ogilvie?" I asked softly.

She laughed, and spoke low. "Jack has found a little yeogirl. He was telling me about her. She is the loveliest thing that ever was, and the sweetest and the gentlest. She may be all that, of course, but there are some lovely, sweet, and gentle girls of his own kind. But, at any rate, Olivia is nothing to him now. It has done him that much good already."

I was silent, thinking. I wondered how I should like it if Pukkie, being of age and his own master, should elect a yeogirl to the high place in his regard now held by his mother and me; should elect the yeogirl to a higher place. It would be a blow. I could not deny it. But we had been ascending the steep path, and we set our bushel of clams beside the hole lined with stones and the slippery pile of brown rockweed. I sighed as we set the basket down, and so did Elizabeth. Then we both laughed.

"I 'm glad that 's done," said Elizabeth.

"Amen!" said I.

Then came Tom Ellis and Cecily, and set their basket down; and Tom, without stopping, went to my pile of cordwood, and brought an armful and laid the sticks in order on the stones.

"Come, Adam," he said, soberly.

"Remember, it's my last clambake for four years."

"Don't say it, Tom!" cried Cecily sharply. "I'll help you with your wood."

So there was a procession of us going to the woodpile and back, and the sticks were laid in order, three layers, on the stones; then another layer of great stones, each stone as big as a football, on the top of the wood. Then I came with a can of kerosene, and sprinkled the wood liberally. Eve had some matches, and she held one out to Ogilvie.

"Light up, Ogilvie," said Tom. "It's your honor."

And Ogilvie lighted the pile, and Tom made some feeble joke about a funeral pyre, and Cecily almost wept; and the fire blazed up fiercely, and we all drew back. It was hot enough without the fire, and would have been almost unbearable but for the southwest breeze which had started up, and which was sweeping gently, over my bluff. And we watched the fire, as anyone will watch any fire — there is fascination in it — but they began to drift away — to get off their rubber boots and to prepare themselves. No doubt they would have fasted if there had been time. And at last there were left only Old Goodwin and Tom and Ogilvie and I. Eve had gone into the house to fetch the things, and Cecily and Elizabeth with her.

When the fire had burned long and the stones were hot, we raked the ashes off; and shook down upon the stones fresh seaweed from the pile, and on the seaweed laid the clams. Then more seaweed; and the other things, in layers, orderly, with the clean, salt-smelling weed between; then the loose stones, hot stone footballs, and over all we piled the weed and made a dome that smoked and steamed and filled the air with incense. And the others, having rested from their labors, leaning on their forks or sitting on the ground, went their several ways; for they would garb themselves.

Eve did not place her guests. She considered, a pretty thoughtfulness in her eyes and about her mouth, and cast her place-cards in a little heap on the table, saying that they might place themselves; for she did not know what was going on, and feared to make a bad matter worse.

They did place themselves, after much hesitation and drifting about. Elizabeth sat next to me. She seemed to think me a kind of refuge. And Ogilvie sat at Eve's right, — she saw to that, — and Olivia next because she could not help it, and then Bobby. Where the rest sat did not matter. And Old Goodwin and Tom and I took our forks and opened the smoking dome, and set upon the table chicken and fish and lobsters and brown bread, and great pans of clams steaming in their gaping shells. Then all would have set themselves to the business of eating; but I had my instructions. I took an old dust-encrusted bottle from Eve's place, and opened it, and went about and poured into the glasses luminous golden stuff from that old bottle.

Then Eve rose, and proposed Ogilvie's health. And we all drank it, but Ogilvie flushed and did not know what to do.

"Oh," he said to Eve, "I never had that done to me before."

And we all laughed, and fell to eating. We opened the clams with our fingers, and took the clam by the head, and gave him a swirl in the saucer of melted butter, and threw our heads back, and took his body into our mouths, and bit him off and cast the head aside, and took the next one. All there had had much experience in the process, and the clams that had seemed enough for a regiment were soon eaten, and there was a prodigious pile of shells under the table so that one could not move his feet without rattling. And the lobsters were gone, and the chickens, and most of the fish, and much of the brown bread. And first one sat back with a sigh, and smiled, and then another; and at last all were sitting, smiling at nothing and doing nothing else — all but Bobby and Olivia. Bobby, it is true, had a smile graven upon his face, but it was a smile of the face and not of the heart; and Olivia seemed out of sorts and did not take the trouble to smile at all. And the bake was but an empty wreck. Then Eve rose quietly, and they all got themselves slowly upon their feet, and began to drift about the bluff.

My place is not very big, only the clipped lawn in front of the house, and about an acre on the south side ending in the bluff, and a couple of acres to the north, where lies my garden and the rest a hayfield. I should have ploughed up that hayfield and put it into potatoes if I could have found anybody to do the ploughing. But it is just as well as a hayfield. Everybody has been planting potatoes this year. I almost expect to see the gutters sprouting potatoes as I ride along with Old Goodwin in his car. Potatoes will be cheap next winter. And if I had ploughed up that field it would have been even less inviting for our guests to wander over.

Not that any of them showed any disposition to wander over it. The older ones seemed well content to settle down again under my pine, Bobby was mooning alone at the edge of the bluff, Elizabeth was standing talking with Jimmy Wales, and Jack Ogilvie was trying to persuade Olivia to walk to a little clump of trees. I had seen Eve showing him the clump of trees earlier in the day. At last they did walk off toward the trees, Olivia obviously discontented and watching Bobby out of the corner of her eye.

I drifted toward Eve, and she drifted toward me, and we came together, which might be reprehensible but was not strange. We generally do come together. She was clad all in light, filmy white, with two red roses at her bosom, and her hair a glory. And her eyes — there are no other such eyes as hers.

"Eve," I whispered, "do you want to be disgraced? How can you expect anything else when you dress as you did for that other clambake that I remember, and your eyes smiling, and that light upon your hair?"

It was more than her eyes that smiled as she looked at me.

"Yes," she whispered in return. "I want to be. Shan't I show you our clump of trees?" She laughed as she finished.

I hesitated. "But Ogilvie — and Olivia."

"Stupid!" she said. "I did not show him every nook. Come!"

So we wandered about, but we brought up at a secluded nook in our clump, and Eve held up her face to mine. But when I had done it she put her finger on my lips and listened.

"Sh!" she breathed. And I sh-sh-ed, and heard Ogilvie's voice, but I could not distinguish any words.

Then came Olivia's voice, shrill and petulant.

"They are not having a good time," Eve whispered.

"He is," I answered; for Ogilvie laughed. It was a merry laugh.

"We don't want to snoop, Adam," said Eve. "Let's —"

"Shall we join the others?" Ogilvie asked, still laughing.

"*You* may if you like," said Olivia in a voice filled with discontent.

"And leave you here?"

"And leave me here. I'll take care of myself."

"Very well. Good-bye, Olivia. I may not see you again."

"Not see me again? You mean to-day?" Was she regretting?

"I mean for a great many days. Perhaps never."

"Are you going away?"

"I can't tell you. I go where I am sent. Good-bye."

There was a silence. Then, as we stole out, the sound of a single sob. Then sounds of anger. As we emerged from one side Olivia emerged from the other. She made straight for Bobby, where he yet stood on the edge of the bluff, looking silently over the water.

A maid came running out of the house, and went to Jimmy Wales, and called him to the telephone. In two minutes he came hurrying out again.

"Bobby!" he called. "Jack! Come along. It's a hurry call for the Nantucket lightship. We'll go with you, Jack. Just as you are."

He whispered to me as he passed. "Submarines reported off the Nantucket lightship," he said. "All the available destroyers and chasers ordered there."

Elizabeth was standing near, and she heard. Jack and Bobby and Jimmy started on a run.

"Good-bye, Jack," Elizabeth called in a clear voice.

He turned and waved.

"Good-bye, Bobby," she called again, but her voice was not so loud.

He turned. "Good-bye," he said. It was like casting at her head a chunk of ice. Ice would not be the most disagreeable thing on that day, but one would prefer it in some other way than thrown at his head. Elizabeth seemed to think so, for she shrugged her shoulders almost imperceptibly, and I saw tears in her eyes as she turned away.

Captain Fergus hurried after the

others, and our other guests melted away. I found myself standing at the edge of the bluff, just where Bobby had been standing, and I gazed out over the waters of the bay — as if I could see the Nantucket lightship! Ogilvie's boat shot out at full speed, and I watched her until she was a gray speck vanishing into the grayness. Gazing out and seeing nothing, and thinking of submarines! It was absurd. They are not, and yet they haunt me. And I looked down at the little strip of marsh at the foot of my bluff, its waving greens turned to orange under the afternoon sun. A blackbird was flying over those green stems waving in the water. The tide was full, and the Great Painter spread his colors on the little waves. It breathed peace, and here was I thinking of submarines. I cannot get rid of them. What if one of these reports turn out to be true? Why, anything might be happening out by the lightship.

And I saw the red shoulders of the blackbird as he flew. He lighted on a reed stem, which swayed down nearly to the surface of the water; and so swaying up and down, he sent out his clear whistle again and again. He is not troubled by the thought of submarines. His heart is not in turmoil over them.

VII

OVER my hayfield, that morning toward the last of June, a pleasant breeze was blowing, and from the southwest, as is the habit of breezes hereabout. A man clad in white flannels, and wandering slowly about, would have found that hayfield cool enough and pleasant, I have no doubt. I found it pleasant, but not cool, for I was mowing. For weeks I sought some one — any one — who would cut my grass, and cut it in June, for I have a prejudice in favor of June for cutting hay. In the last week of June the grass is in full flower — tiny blossoms of a pale violet color — and the stems are swollen with the juices, and rich and tender. I, in my ignorance, believe that it makes more succulent hay than if cut in July, when the stalks have begun to dry up and become thin and wiry. Besides, if it is cut in June it is out of the way, and I can use my hayfield for a ball-field if I am so minded.

I am no mower, and I have not known what a scythe should be. I was dimly aware that my old scythe was not everything that could be desired, for I remember that when I took it to be ground the man applied it lightly to his stone, then harder, then cursed and bore on with all his might, and cursed again and sweated for half an hour, and charged me ten cents, holding the scythe out to me as if he never wanted to see it again. He observed that it was the hardest scythe he ever see; and I smiled and thanked him, and thought no more of the matter, and walked off with my scythe. And I struggled with that scythe for ten years, never being able to keep it sharp, and spending much more time with the whetstone than I did in mowing, but I did but little mowing, only trimming around here and there. I never *got* the scythe sharp. I know that now, but I did not know it then, attributing the fault to my own lack of skill.

I got a new scythe the other day, being unwilling to whet through two acres. I can get it as sharp as a razor in half a dozen strokes of the stone. When I tried it the other afternoon, just before dinner, I found myself laughing, and I should have gone at the hayfield then if Eve had not stopped me. Now I go about with my scythe in my hand, and hunt for clumps of grass tall enough to cut, for the hayfield is shorn close and tolerably smooth, and the grass lies in the sun and gives off all manner of sweet odors.

The mowing of that hayfield with that new scythe was simply a joy — a delight. I swung to and fro with the rhythmic motion of rowing — mowing is not unlike rowing, and one swings about thirty or more to the minute — with my eyes on the ground, and I listened to the sounds: a soft ripping with a little metallic *ting* as the scythe advanced, and a gentle *swish* as it swung back again. Yes, mowing is a delight — with a good scythe; but it is a hot sort of amusement. If I could regulate matters mowing time should fall in November. All mowing should be done by hand, and mowing should be compulsory for all able-bodied men. They would be the better for it.

I stood for a few minutes, leaning on my scythe and letting the breeze blow through me and gazing down the bay. Then I went at my mowing again and the scythe sang a new song. It was *sub — marine; sub — marine,* over and over. And I kept at my mowing mechanically while I thought my thoughts. There had been no reports of submarines since the day of Eve's party, and nothing further said of the report of that day. Even Bobby would say no more than that they did not find any; and when I would have rallied him, remarking that I feared he had not baited his traps properly, he glowered at me, which hurt my feelings. It was not like Bobby to glower. But Bobby seemed tormented by that restlessness which seizes on men in a certain case. I did not laugh at him, for I feared lest he take it but ill, but I did counsel him to take to clamming; at which he gave me a smile that would have brought tears to Eve's eyes. He has not yet found that fount of eternal youth, and whether he will find it or not no one can guess. I hope he will, and that joy and peace will be in his abiding place forever. And the one who should show him the fount is not far to seek, as he well knows; but, as I think, and Eve too, he is stubborn and cherishes some fancied grievance, hugging it to his heart. The poor fool!

'Then I stopped mowing, and

straightened my back, and rested. And, on a sudden, that talking machine of my neighbor began pouring forth a strident voice, and I looked and there was the little Sands girl watching me over the wall. She no longer throws things. But I was not giving an exhibition of mowing, and I nodded to her, and went back to my garden. Melons are a lottery; but I looked at my peas — my second look that morning — to make sure that they will be ready for the Fourth, and I took a turn about the garden. And all the while I listened, much against my will, to that strident voice. And when it had finished that particular humorous selection, I fled, my scythe on my arm, for fear that I should have some sort of secret liking for the next selection; and I came to my pine, and I sat me down on the seat, and again my gaze ran across the waters of the harbor, well ruffled by the breeze and dancing in the sun, to the shore opposite; and down that curving line of shore to the lighthouse on its rock; and over the blue-gray water beyond, that was lightly veiled in haze, to the islands floating high. And on the water between the lighthouse and the islands I saw the Arcadia. She was coming fast, with all her light canvas set, a thing of beauty. It would be a fast submarine I thought, that could damage her — in any sort of breeze. Then I thought idly of Captain Fergus, and of Elizabeth and Olivia, and Bobby and Ogilvie, and of Eve and Pukkie. That is the goal — Eve and Pukkie and Tidda — little Eve.

Elizabeth has been our guest for the past two weeks when she has not been on the Arcadia. She puzzles me yet. What is she doing here so long — a poor girl, seeming to be loafing out the summer? She should be conducting her classes in swimming. It is likely enough that the same question has been a puzzle to Bobby; but he takes it harder than I. I am content to let the question go unanswered and have her stay with us. She is a good comrade, and a comfort to Eve, and she is fond of Tidda, and Pukkie is her willing slave. For Pukkie is at home again.

He came on the twelfth. I remember that we had had a hard rain for two days before, and that all the ploughed land was no better than a bog, and all the fields were covered with water under their cover of grass, so that the water was running out through the crevices of the stone walls, through each crevice a rivulet. But not my field, and my garden was no bog. And I waited, sitting just where I was at that moment and gazing idly at the same things that were there before my eyes. I could not work in peace, nor sit in peace for many minutes at a time, but I spent the morning going like a shuttle from garden to pine and wandering the shore, then back again.

Eve had gone with Old Goodwin in his fastest car to bring him back —"him" being Pukkie, my son. But as the time approached for his arrival I sat upon the bench and simulated peace and content, and gave no outward sign of other; but every muscle was tense, and every nerve on edge; I listened so hard that it hurt, and I wished devoutly that Old Goodwin's car was not so perfect and so silent, and I resolutely kept my gaze fixed upon the distant hills, and did not see them.

At last I heard the latch of the gate click faintly, as though somebody had tried to lift it without noise, and I heard an excited chuckle, instantly subdued. And I turned quickly, forgetting that I had resolved not to turn, and there was Pukkie running toward me. And I whipped up and ran, and I sank upon one knee and held my arms wide. And Pukkie ran into them at full speed, almost knocking me over, and he threw his arms around my neck, and he hugged me. He hugged me so tight that I was nearly strangled; but not quite — not so nearly but that I could hug him close and whisper in his ear.

"Oh, Pukkie!" I whispered. "My dear little son! My well beloved!"

For answer he but hugged me the harder, and gave an excited little laugh that was near to tears. That was enough for me. Indeed, I was not so far from tears. I looked up at Eve, who had followed close, and tears stood in her eyes, but she was smiling. Oh, such a smile! A smile that belongs to wives and mothers — of a certain kind. And, seeing her, I gave thanks. But that is nothing new that I give thanks for that, for I have done the same many times a day for many years.

Then Old Goodwin came up behind Eve.

"If you and Pukkie can spare the time," he said to me, "I should be glad to have you ride home with me — you and Eve. I have something to show you."

Pukkie went somewhat eagerly, and Eve and I, having devoted ourselves to following our son about, went after, not so eagerly. And Old Goodwin took us down to his boathouse, which is at the head of his stone pier and gives upon his artificial harbor, and out of the car and into the boathouse.

"Grandfather," said Pukkie, trying in vain to keep all signs of excitement out of his voice, "is it my dory that we're going to see? Is it?"

Old Goodwin smiled to himself. "Well, no, Pukkie. It is n't your dory. I did n't manage that. But it 's something of that nature."

"Oh," said Pukkie in low tones of disappointment, "I did n't know but — " Old Goodwin had opened the door at the other side. "Oh! What 's that?"

Made fast to the stage there lay a perfect little sloop about twenty feet long which seemed to be an exact reproduction in miniature of a large boat. Every sail was there which the large boats carried, every rope and block and stay, although they had drawn the line at a separate topmast. I realized at a glance that there were too many ropes and blocks and stays for her size. It would take more of a crew to handle her easily than she could carry.

But Pukkie realized nothing of the

kind. He ran toward her, and stood beside her, touching with a fearful hand her smooth deck, and the pretty blocks and cleats of shining brass, and smiling.

There was even a gangway ladder, and her gunwale not much more than a foot above the water.

Pukkie turned his shining face to me.

"Oh, daddy," he cried, "look at her dear little jibs. Are n't they cunning?"

They were cunning and tiny.

Old Goodwin, simple-hearted gentleman that he was, was as pleased as Pukkie. He seemed delighted.

"There are other sails," he said, smiling and eager. "In the sail locker you will find a gafftopsail and a jibtopsail and a flying jib.

We could n't very well manage any more," he added to me.

"They are quite enough," I returned, "for her size — and for her crew to manage."

"She is rather deep for her length," Old Goodwin went on. "A boy can stand straight in her cabin, and a man very nearly. Go aboard, Puk, and see. Go down into the cabin."

So Pukkie, excited and solemn, went aboard, stepping carefully, and opened the cabin doors, and disappeared. We followed him on deck and looked down. There was a little table in the middle which would fold up out of the way, and there were two small transoms with little netted hammocks for the sleeper's clothes, like a sleeping-car. And there was a silver pitcher for ice water, and racks for glasses and dishes, and shelves with brass rails around them, and lockers tucked away in every corner, and a door at the forward end which should have led to the galley. Old Goodwin saw my look of incredulity, and he smiled.

"There is a galley," he said, "although a very small one. But I think a boy could manage it. About the size of a cupboard." Old Goodwin pushed the slide farther back. "We had to put this slide on her," he said apologetically, "or there could n't have been a cabin of any use to anybody. I was sorry."

I was not sorry. It would help to keep the seas off. But Pukkie took one last look around, drew one long, quivering breath, and came up.

"Oh, see!" he cried.

I turned and looked where he was pointing. There was the little wheel, which we had seen before; and there too was a tiny binnacle with its compass, cunningly contrived to take no room, set just forward of the wheel.

"Do you like it, Pukkie?" Old Goodwin asked somewhat wistfully. "Do you think that you'll like her as well as you would have liked a dory?"

"Like her!" cried Pukkie. "Like her! Oh, grandfather!"

And he leaped at his grandfather, and seized him about the neck, and hid his face; and Old Goodwin patted Pukkie's shoulder, somewhat awkwardly, and smiled at Eve and me. I wonder what is the market value of the time that Old Goodwin wastes upon his grandson.

Then Pukkie would go sailing at

once. It did not matter that it was time for luncheon, although my clock that I carry beneath my belt told me that it was. He was not hungry. It did not occur to him to wonder about me, or he would have offered to get me a luncheon in his galley. So we set forth to sail the raging main; a little sail of half an hour, with Eve and Old Goodwin to see us off.

So we set all the little sails, but we did not get out from the sail locker that gafftopsail and the jibtopsail and that wonderful flying jib. The wind was moderately strong. And we glided out from Old Goodwin's harbor with me at the wheel, and Pukkie sitting beside me with shining face. The little boat was handy, and she went about her business with no fuss, and the water began to hiss past under her rail. And I sat the straighter. Truly, what is luncheon?

We passed some fishermen going out — the same way that we were going, and we passed them as if they were at anchor; and they gazed in amazement and I saw them pointing. I headed for a lighter that I saw dimly through the light haze — she was anchored by a wreck, as I chanced to know — and I gave up the wheel to Pukkie.

He had never steered with a wheel, but I undertook to teach him — although the art of steering, whether with a wheel or with a tiller, cannot be taught. One learns to steer by feeling. And Pukkie was alert and anxious to learn. I told him to keep the boat headed for the lighter, at which he looked at me in surprise, and suggested that it might be too far to get back in half an hour. It was; but I did not tell him so.

Thereafter, for some time, the boat cut some astonishing capers, which must have set those fishermen to wondering. We passed the fish traps, with men in rowboats busy with taking in the catch; and we passed innumerable terns, or, rather, they passed us, and they were fishing and sending forth their harsh metallic cry; and we saw a pair of fishhawks, and they too were fishing. All fishing. Truly, the business of the waters is catching fish. And Pukkie was getting the hang of the wheel and steering a straighter course, so that he could give some attention to other matters.

There were rocks which looked like monsters just risen from the deep, and with the water washing over their backs.

"They look like submarines," said Pukkie. "Don't they, daddy?"

I explained to him the appearance of the back of a modern submarine; but the rocks did remind me of submarines. Everything reminds me of submarines. And we saw, afar off upon the water, a small gray speck. And the speck grew until it became a motor-boat, painted a dark gray. Why they paint them a gray that is almost black is a mystery. There is no concealment in it. This motor-boat was small, and was heading right for us, it seemed.

"Is that a chaser, daddy?" Pukkie seems to have the jargon pat. Probably he learned it at school. "It is n't very fast, is it? It could n't catch a submarine, could it? It would n't be any use to chase with that." His words held a depth of scorn. Always submarines. I cannot get away from them. "Why don't you go out and chase them, daddy? I should think you would like to. I would."

I am thankful that he cannot. I gave him some answer that seemed to satisfy him.

"That chaser is trying to meet us," he resumed. "Whichever way I go, she goes too."

It did look so; but it was a small boat and slow. I thought that we could beat her likely enough, if it came to a chase, but Pukkie would not have it so. He wanted to meet her, and asked me to steer.

We met in a few minutes, and the

pleasant-faced ensign hailed me and asked if I had a license or a permit or something. I knew nothing of any permit, and I told him so, and he said that they were required, and we had to turn about and sail back again. It was just as well, for we were like to be over our half-hour; and we got in well ahead of the motor-boat.

Since that day I have been out with Pukkie every afternoon, for he must be taught to sail if he has a boat. He is well used to going with me in my dory and he swims passing well for a boy of ten. He will be eleven in October. And Elizabeth has taken him in hand. She sails nearly as well as she swims, and she sails with him nearly every morning; and sometimes Eve and she go with us in the afternoon. I feared a little at first to take so many, for I thought it might swamp the boat; but the boat will carry all she will hold.

I had got to this point in my meditations, and I was well rested, and I was somewhat cooler than I was; and my scythe rested against the bench beside me, and I gazed down the bay at the Arcadia, and I wondered idly about Captain Fergus. If Elizabeth was a mystery, he was no less. He did not seem the sort of man to be sailing idly about in a beautiful, fast yacht when everybody else was busy in looking for something to fight; everybody but Old Goodwin and me, and Old Goodwin is nearly seventy. Fergus is a fighter if ever I saw one, the very kind of man that would stick out his jaw and damn the torpedoes.

Since Tom Ellis is gone, I have no moral support against my conscience — if it is my conscience that makes me vaguely uncomfortable — except the knowledge of Eve's pacifist attitude. I try not to say anything that would give her concern, but it is hard sometimes. It gets harder as time goes on. Gardening is well enough, but I hate to be left alone and gardening. Gardening seems but a poor occupation for a man when other matters are afoot, although it is better, perhaps, than acting as chauffeur for a lot of naval officers. But Tom seems to like it well enough, and says that he has put himself entirely in their hands, and does whatever he is called upon to do, without a thought for the morrow, which is, no doubt, the proper attitude. Cecily likes it too, and spends most of her time in Newport, going to and fro in Old Goodwin's car. I went over with them one day, and the first thing my eyes alighted upon was the Arcadia just come to anchor, and Captain Fergus landing at the War College. Perhaps his conscience was too much for him. Fergus is a year or two older than I am, and — confound it! — there is some fight left in me yet. If there were only something more than phantoms to fight! And this frantic search for what is not!

I heard the sound of a screen door slamming, and looked around the tree-trunk, and saw Pukkie running over the grass toward me; and behind him there came, at a somewhat more sedate pace, Eve and Elizabeth.

"Daddy," Pukkie called as soon

as he saw me, "don't you want to go swimming? We're going. Tidda's at grandmother's."

Being indulged, of course, with unlimited cookies and raisins and anything else she took a fancy to. Grandmothers have a talent for indulging, and Tidda has a genius for accepting indulgences.

"I do, Pukkie. That is exactly what I want. I have been mowing. Is your mother going swimming? You going in, Eve?"

"Yes, she's going." And Eve smiled and nodded.

So I put my scythe in the shed, and we went down the steep path, and along the shore where the water lapped high; and past my clam beds to the bathhouse near the stone pier. The bathhouse is Old Goodwin's, as any might guess, and the little beach is Old Goodwin's, and the float-stage a little way out, with its spring-board. It is good bathing at that little beach only when high water covers the sand. Beyond the sand are great pebbles covered with rockweed and barnacles.

Eve came out hesitating, her eyes smiling and tender as she looked at me; but a dark green cap covered her glorious hair except some wisps which ever bother her with their straggling, and the sun shone upon the wandering locks and framed her head in fine spun copper.

"Don't you think, Adam," she asked timidly, "we might go in here? It is a good tide — and I'm afraid I can't manage the float."

Eve does not swim very well, although confidence is all she lacks to make her a passable swimmer. And I was quite willing, but Elizabeth would not hear of it, promising that she would look out for Eve; and she had us all in the boat and rowing out before we could make our objections heard.

And no sooner were we well clear of the beach, than Elizabeth dived, and when she came up again, — it was some distance that she was under water — she called to Pukkie. And Pukkie, with supreme confidence in Elizabeth, stood up on the seat and dived over the side, and swam beside her.

Eve seemed to have more confidence in Elizabeth than she had in me, which is not strange, for I have observed that, in matters of skill or knowledge or judgment, a woman will trust the veriest stranger before her husband, although in this matter of skill and knowledge Elizabeth was well past me.

So Eve trusted herself utterly to Elizabeth, and she made some progress in her swimming. And we all floundered about there in the cool, clean water until Elizabeth said that Eve was cold, and then we all drew ourselves, dripping, on to the float, and there, but a little way off, was the Arcadia anchored, and her sails nearly furled.

As I gazed at her I thought I saw something queer about her topmast stays — a little thing. It looked almost like aerials for wireless. I asked Elizabeth about it.

She was looking at it too, almost with satisfaction.

"Yes," she said, "I see. It does look as if it might be."

Why should she know? And then the tender put off with Captain Fergus and Bobby and made for the landing, going rather close to us huddled on the float. They hailed us, Bobby very solemnly, but they did not stop.

There was a light of mischief in Eve's eyes.

"I'm going to have Bobby to dinner to-night," she whispered.

"If he'll come," I said in her ear.

"Oh, he'll come."

And he did.

Eve and I were standing alone together and silent and hand in hand upon the edge of my bluff, watching while the Great Painter spread his colors as he was wont to do. The still waters were covered with all manner of reds and purples. The grasses of the little marsh below us waved gently above the shining mud, and now and then there broke a wave that ran in among the grass stems in ripples of color, and left the wet mud glistening in a coat of shimmering green, and set the grass waving anew.

As we stood there looking down, Bobby came silently and stood beside us, and breathed a long sigh, and gazed for a long time. Then he looked at Eve and smiled.

"Lovely," he said, "and peaceful. For the matter of that, it would be hard to find a more peaceful-looking place than the lightship — in good weather."

"Then, Bobby," I said, "I take it that not many periscopes have fallen to your bow and spear."

He shook his head. "I'm disgusted. I'm beginning to think that the Germans have no submarines, and that all these tales are fables. Your traps, Adam, are no good. I'd just like to get a chance to go across to the North Sea or Ireland or the Channel. I'll tell you in strict confidence — we have been warned not to talk about these things — a mine sweeper went to Boston a few days ago, on the way over. Nobody knows when she will leave Boston. I was greatly tempted to try for a place on her. But I'll get there yet."

"No doubt there would be occupation for idle hands over there. But what has become of Ogilvie? We have not seen him since the clambake."

"He's busy. He's going over —

to go on a chaser. Lucky chap! He had his orders that very morning. Waiting for the chaser. But I'd be tried for high treason if you were to tell anybody — even Miss Radnor, for instance."

I had turned about, and there was Elizabeth. She must have heard it all, for she turned pale, and the light in her eyes went out suddenly, leaving them cold as stones. It was a pity.

She came forward slowly. "Why are you afraid of me, Mr. Leverett?"

"Afraid of you?" asked Bobby in surprise. "I am not. Why should I be?" It was a challenge. "We have been warned to be cautious."

"It was not I who was incautious," said Elizabeth.

Bobby smiled, and his smile was not pleasant to see, but he spoke in a faultless manner.

"You are never incautious," he said. "Trust you for that."

Then Pukkie came running, with Tidda after him, and they pitched upon Bobby and created a diversion, which we welcomed.

Our dinner was not a success, as may well be imagined. Elizabeth was cold and silent, which was not like her. We had come to know Elizabeth pretty well, and we liked her; and we knew Bobby very well, and we liked him. And it is unpleasant and awkward when people whom you like and who like each other — I knew it well enough — speak together little and look upon one another with hostility which is but ill concealed. And, dinner over, we withdrew to our candles, but Elizabeth went up with Tidda, and Pukkie followed her. Bobby laughed mirthlessly at that, and muttered something. It sounded to me like "latest victim."

We had a pleasant but short evening with Bobby, and he left early, making an excuse of duty. As we turned away we encountered Elizabeth, who murmured that she had just got the children to sleep, and said that she was going out for a few minutes.

"I was glad to hear that news of Jack," she said. "To say truth, I have known it for a long time. Jack told me." Truly, she was not incautious. "It will settle the yeogirl. That was a joke, he wrote me. But, whether it was or not, it will settle her."

"And Olivia?" I asked.

"Olivia is settled already. She has gone home."

VIII

INDEED, a conscience is a most distressing comrade. And, albeit a conscience is not for a fisherman,— he cannot afford it,— a clammer may be pricked and stabbed and plagued by that he would willingly get rid of. For I suppose it was my conscience that impelled me to buy — in secret, for I would not have Eve know of it lest it give her anxiety — a little card with two revolving discs and pictures of a signalman in every position that is possible to a signalman.

By diligent use of that card and much practice in the proper manner of waving my arms I hoped to make myself duly proficient in the art of signalling by the wigwag method.

I found the card at a nautical instrument store in the city on the day after our dinner; and as I looked at it somewhat doubtfully, the clerk pulled out a little book that gave the matter more at length. I bought them both, and I have been practising the motions for a week in secret. And that has its difficulties too, that I do it in secret, for if I practised in the house it was not secret, nor was it secret in my garden or in the hayfield or on my bluff. At last I hit upon that little clump of trees. No one could see me there.

To-day being the Fourth of July, I thought it fit that I practise more diligently than usual. So, having gathered my first peas, a generous mess of them, I repaired to the clump of trees; and having propped the book upon a branch and hung the card upon a twig, I began. But no sooner had I got to work at it than somebody came running out of the house, softly calling, "Adam! Adam!" It was the voice of Eve, and she was waving a paper, for I could hear it rustling. And I swept the book off its branch and the card from its twig, tearing the card in my haste, and I stepped from my hiding-place on to the bluff, so that I should seem to be but gazing out over the water, as is my wont.

I was just putting the book and the card in my pocket when Eve came upon me, but she was so intent that she did not notice. The paper that she had is published in the nearest city, and it is a good paper, a better paper than any published in Boston. It suits me even better than the London "Times," to which I subscribe, for although the "Times" has the war news in greater detail than we have it, it is usually three weeks old; and news which one has read three weeks before is old enough to have been forgotten.

She held the paper up before my eyes.

"See, Adam," she said. "Here is good news for the Fourth. Our transports have beaten the submarines, great flocks of them, and have sunk some of them, and they have arrived safely, every ship and every man."

I smiled at her enthusiasm. "That should be good news. To be sure, the submarines that were sunk carried their crews down with them to be drowned like rats in a trap, and we used to think that Germans were pretty good —"

"Good!" she cried. "When they have committed so many murders on the sea!"

"Well, these Germans will commit no more murders. Let me see your paper."

There it was in great staring lines of type before my eyes. I had but just digested the headlines, and was preparing to read the solid columns when Eve snatched it away.

"I can't wait for you to read it all. I want to show it to father."

There was probably nothing there that Old Goodwin did not know already. He has a way of knowing things; but I said nothing of it. I smiled again at Eve, and let her go.

"Adam," she said anxiously, turning back, "*you* would n't commit murders on the sea, would you? *You* could n't persuade yourself that it was right?"

"Well," I answered gravely, "I have none in contemplation, but I have not given the matter much consideration. If I were sailing the high seas, and were to meet — also sailing the raging main — Sands and his talking machine, I might —"

Eve laughed. "Yes, you might." And she came back and kissed me. "You're no sort of a murderer."

"You don't know, Eve," I protested, "what sort of a murderer I might be. I would not boast, and I speak in all modesty, but I try to do as well as I can whatever I set my hand to. I venture to say that I should do my murdering thoroughly."

She laughed again, merrily, and again she kissed me.

"The murdering that you will do will not amount to that." And she snapped her fingers. "Jack Ogilvie is like to do more of it, — if you call that murder." She sighed and turned away. "Now I will go."

And she was gone down the steep path and along the shore, stopping now and then to wave at me. It hurt me somewhat not to go with her, but I must be at my signalling.

So, as soon as Eve was out of sight in the greenery, I began again, standing on the bluff where I was, an imprudent thing to do. I laid my book and my card upon the ground, and began to wave my arms gently, stooping now and then to the book to be sure that I had it right, and saying the names of the letters to myself as I waved. For each letter has a name in the signal book. And as I waved, I thought upon Eve's sigh that she had sighed as she turned away, and it seemed almost as if she were sorry that I was not as Ogilvie; but that could not be that she would have me go, for had she not said other? And, without knowing what I was doing, I proclaimed it to the world. "Eve would have me murder," was the sentence I was signalling. "Eve would have me murder on the sea even as Ogilvie." I was even shouting the names of the letters by this. And I looked and there was a big gray motor-boat just without the harbor, and Ogilvie himself standing up on her deck and watching me — and wondering, I had no doubt.

The motor-boat came on swiftly, and Ogilvie watched me as if he thought I had gone daft, while I, out of bravado I fear, signalled again that message about Eve, no better than a lie. And directly opposite my bluff the motor-boat came to a stop, and Ogilvie began to wave his arms, so that any that saw might well think there were two madmen in the harbor. And to my delight, I could read it, and read it easily. It was a brief message, it is true. "What!" said Ogilvie with his waving arms. "Repeat."

I did not repeat, but I sent him another message. "Come up here and I will explain. I am practising. Give me some more."

So he gave me more, and I could read it, although his messages were not simple. It filled my soul with an unreasonable joy, as a boy's when he finds that he has mastered at school some task which he thought that he had not. And we waved our arms at each other, two gone clean crazy, for a long time, and Ogilvie smiled more and more, until at last he laughed.

"Well done," he signalled. "I will be there in half an hour."

And the motor-boat started again, and I turned, smiling, well pleased with myself, and there sat Eve on the bench under the pine, and she was laughing.

"Adam," she said, "come here and sit beside me, and explain. Oh, bring your book." For in my awkwardness I was leaving it there on the grass. "I saw it. I have been watching you."

And I turned meekly as that same boy at school caught in some mischief, and I went and sat beside her, but I did not explain.

"Where is Elizabeth?" I asked.

"Elizabeth," she said, "has gone sailing with Pukkie. You might have known it. Now, what were you doing, and why were you doing it?"

I have found the truth to serve me best, and I would not tell Eve other than the truth in any littlest thing. So I told her all, and showed her the matter all set forth in the book. And she was interested and pleased, and would learn wigwagging herself.

"You must teach me, Adam," she said, "and we will do it together."

And that pleased me mightily,

that we do it together. And she clasped my arm in both her hands, and bent forward and looked up into my face. And in her eyes as she looked was even greater tenderness than was wont to be, and that was a marvel; and there was a great joy too.

"Tell me, Adam," she said softly. "Why did you do it? What set you at it?"

"The nature that God gave me," I said, "or conscience, which is the same thing. I do not know. It — it is hard, Eve, to be forty-three when one would be twenty-three — for a reason. As for the signalling," I added, "that is nothing much, save that we be learning it together."

"I know," she said. "A symptom."

I did not know what she meant, whether my conscience or the signalling. But still she was looking up at me with joy in her eyes, and happiness; and she gave a little soft cry and a little happy laugh, and she squeezed my arm between her hands.

"Oh, Adam, Adam!" she cried low. "I love you — you don't know how much. And I don't wish that *I* was twenty-three. Do you know why?"

I could not guess.

"At twenty-three I was not married," said Eve. "I did not even know you."

What I did then any may guess. No doubt it was imprudent too. And we were once more sitting decorous, and about Eve's lips and in her eyes was that smile of joy and happiness.

"You will see, Adam," she said. "It will all come right."

"What will come right?" asked a voice. "Is anything wrong?"

And we turned, and there was Jack Ogilvie.

"I do not know what Eve meant," I answered him, "unless she referred to my signalling. No doubt that is wrong enough."

He shook his head. "Nothing wrong about that. You do it very well."

Then I asked him for the latest news from the seat of war.

"Well," he said, "we are forbidden to tell the news, although there is n't any. But if you were to go to Newport you would see a big British cruiser lying there. And if you had your glass with you you could read her name." He gave her name, but I have forgotten it. "It is supposed to be a secret, and has not been in the papers, but everybody at Newport knows it. They can't help it. The officers go about very swagger and very stiff, carrying little canes. You may see me carrying a little cane one of these days, but I have not yet arrived at that dignity — or folly, whichever you call it."

I smiled. "Did you never carry a little cane in college?"

"Oh, sometimes, for the sake of doing it, because I had a right to. But this is real."

"When you come back from England, or France, or wherever you are going, perhaps you will carry a cane." He seemed startled, but only for a moment.

"What makes you think I am going over?"

"Bobby told us — in confidence. When?"

He seemed relieved. "If Bobby told you that lets me out. I was afraid I might have dropped it somehow. I don't know when, but soon, I think."

"Jack," said Eve suddenly — it was the first time I had heard her call Ogilvie Jack — "Jack, we will have a clambake for a farewell. I hope they will give you some days' notice of your going."

"Thank you," he returned, smiling. "It is more likely to be hours' notice. But I will come to your clambake if I can."

"And can you bring," Eve asked, "your yeogirl? I invite her, and ask you to deliver the invitation."

He laughed suddenly. "My yeogirl — did you hear she was a joke?

She is a real girl, but I don't know her, and I could n't bring her over here, — or anywhere. No, I'm afraid you will have to get somebody else to deliver the invitation. How would Mr. Wales do? — or Bobby?"

"Jimmy has a wife, my cousin."

"Yes, I know. But Bobby — he has n't any."

"Poor Bobby would be in greater trouble than ever. Besides, he would n't do it. Bobby has developed a nasty temper lately. I wanted the yeogirl for you, and if you don't want her — I am sorry Olivia has gone."

"Olivia would never do for me," he said, shaking his head. "I guess I shall have to devote myself to the clams — or to Elizabeth."

"You might do worse, young man," I said severely.

"I might," he assented. "In fact I have done worse."

I did not know whether he referred to the clams or to Elizabeth; but it was true in either case. And he said nothing more, and thereupon a silence fell, which is no misfortune and no embarrassment when the people are suited to it. I had been seeing Pukkie's yacht for some time, and she had just disappeared behind Old Goodwin's pier. And she had three people in her, when I supposed she carried only Elizabeth and Pukkie. I mentioned it to Eve, who was as much surprised as I; and we watched the pier and the shore.

And presently we saw coming along the shore, where the little waves were breaking, three figures. The figures were those of Elizabeth and Pukkie — of those two I was certain — and the third looked like Bobby. I had to look several times before I was sure of him. He was walking beside Elizabeth, and his attitude betokened a strange mixture of devotion and distaste. As I looked again I saw that Elizabeth and Pukkie had been recently wet — very wet — and they were not yet dry. Bobby was not wet. The inference was obvious: Elizabeth and Pukkie had been overboard, and Bobby had not. But where had Bobby come from? Eve and I hurried down the steep path, and met them at its foot.

Elizabeth raised her eyes to me, and I saw two deep pools under a summer sun, and all manner of colors played over them, concealing the depths. Then for an instant the lights were quenched that concealed the depths, and her eyes became as two dark wells with yet a sort of light illumining the darkness, and there I saw content, but not satisfaction — if those two can be reconciled. It was for but an instant, and then the lights came back, and her eyes danced, and she laughed at me.

"Are you wondering," she asked, "what has happened to us, and what Bobby Leverett is doing here?"

"It is easy to guess," I answered, "that you and Pukkie have been overboard, although why you should go in swimming in all your clothes is another matter. But I must confess to some wonder about that matter standing fidgeting there." And I pointed an accusing finger at Bobby.

Bobby was ill at ease, and struggling between the constraint that was upon him and a wish to tell his tale.

"Well, you see, Adam," he began, "I — we were cruising —"

"Who," I asked, interrupting, "is 'we'?"

"Bobby," said Elizabeth quietly, "you'd better let me tell it first. Puk and I," she continued, addressing Eve and me, "were sailing along too calmly, and he wanted to put up the gafftopsail. So he got it out, and ran with it, and he caught his foot in some of the superfluous ropes and blocks, and went overboard — topsail and all. I was afraid he might be tangled in the sail, so I let all the halliards go on the run, and I went after him. I got him, and saved the sail, and there was a boat from the

Rattlesnake, with Bobby. He helped us on board again, and insisted upon coming with us."

Bobby again opened his mouth to speak.

"One moment, Bobby," I said. "Tell me, Elizabeth, did the Rattlesnake spring so suddenly?"

She smiled and glanced at Bobby. "Oh, we had seen her before. That was why Puk was wanting the topsail. He wanted to see if we could beat her."

"Oh," said I, and I looked at Bobby, who squirmed as a caterpillar on a stick.

"We happened to be near," he said. He spoke calmly enough, but I saw that he was very uncomfortable. "I thought I ought to come, for Pukkie was very wet, and I wanted to be sure he was all right. Miss Radnor had rather a nasty time getting him clear of that sail."

"Bobby!" said Elizabeth warningly. And suddenly she smiled as if she was much amused at something, perhaps at Bobby.

"Bobby," said Eve softly, "it was very good of you. Did Elizabeth save Pukkie's life?"

"I'm not sure," Bobby answered slowly, "that Pukkie's life was in danger, but I'm not sure that it was not."

Eve clasped Pukkie to her, wet as he was. I would have done the same.

"Bobby," Eve said again, looking up at him, "was there no one else that was very wet? I'm ashamed of you." She had spoken low.

"Er — you see," Bobby answered wriggling, "I knew very well that Eliz — Miss Radnor would be all right. She is—er—very competent."

And Elizabeth laughed at him and dropped a curtsey. "Thank you," she said.

Bobby was struggling with his desire to smile and with his dignity.

"I've got to get back somehow," he said. "Hello, there's Ogilvie." Ogilvie had been standing in plain sight at the top of the bluff. "He can take me — that is, if you can spare him." He beckoned to him, and Ogilvie came down. "You'll have to take me out, Jack."

Ogilvie grinned and saluted, and they started off together. But they had gone only a few steps when Bobby turned.

"I almost forgot to say good-bye."

He smiled unhappily, and was turning back, but Elizabeth ran to him and held out her hand.

"You can be on your dignity if you like, Bobby," she whispered, not so low but that I heard it, "but I'm not going to be. Good-bye, and thank you."

And Bobby had taken the hand that she held out. He held it for a long time, but said nothing that I could hear, but only looked. And he relinquished her hand — actually flung it from him — and strode away after Ogilvie. And Elizabeth came back to us quietly, but her eyes shone and she was smiling.

"Now," she said, "Puk and I will get on some dry clothes. You may as well rub him, Eve."

It must have been a narrower escape than Elizabeth would admit. As we ascended the steep path, I thought upon the manner of journey that would have been if there had been no escape at all. Pukkie, my dearly beloved son! And I reached forward and hugged him, and for the rest of the way my arm lay along his shoulders.

That night we heard firing from the fort, perhaps a dozen shots. We hear that firing every few nights. Eve and I looked out — we were just going to bed — and saw the flashes against the sky above the trees, and heard the sound as if cannon balls were being dropped on the floor over our heads. Eve wondered what it was, and I told her it was probably some tug trying to go in or out of the harbor to the east of us at a forbidden time.

"Oh," she said, relieved, "I thought that it might be submarines—or fireworks."

IX

IT was on a Saturday morning about the middle of July, and it had been foggy; and I had watched the fog retreating stealthily, withdrawing one long vaporous arm and then another, slinking back like a wraith before the sun, as if trying to get away unperceived. There was no writhing and twisting in the anguish of defeat and dissolution, no jets and shreds vanishing into the hot air above. But the ways of the fog over the sea are a mystery, and I am not yet at the end of them.

I had gone over to Old Goodwin's to take my daughter, and I had left her with one of the army of starched and stiff imitations of men in buttons who haunt the house. They guard every door, so that a man cannot so much as turn a handle for himself; and one is to be found in each passage, and at every turn. They might be wooden images from a Noah's Ark, endowed with movement, but not with life. There are not so many of them as there were some years ago. They are none of Old Goodwin's doing, and Mrs. Goodwin has somewhat lost her fancy for them; and some of them, Old Goodwin told me, have enlisted. Fancy! Those men in buff uniform and many buttons enlisting! But they will be well used to wearing a uniform, and they will be well used to doing without question what they are told to do, and to keeping their faces like masks. They will make good soldiers

I have no doubt, and they may be in France at this moment.

The buttons who admitted us was not so very starched and stiff, and he seemed to have been endowed with life as well as movement, and to have become actually a human being. For he smiled when he saw my daughter, and spoke pleasantly to her, so that I was persuaded that he was even glad to see her. And she, having thrown him some pleasantry, and a smile with it, dashed past him through the great hall and vanished. And he, still smiling, closed the door upon me, and I went in search of Old Goodwin, who deals not in uniforms and buttons.

I found him on that part of his piazza where stands the great telescope on its massive tripod. Before him there lay his ocean steamer at anchor, and he gazed at her steadily — but not through the telescope.

He turned his head as I came, and gave me his quiet smile of peace.

"Good-morning, Adam," he said. "I was just wishing that you would come."

Old Goodwin with his quiet smile — even in his clammer's clothes and his old stained rubber boots — is yet Goodwin the Rich. It is a marvel.

"Good-morning," I said. "And here I am to do with what you will — for the space of some hours."

"It may take some hours," he returned, "and it may be done in less."

I did not in the least know what he was talking about, but I was to find out. He was silent for some while.

"Any news lately?" he asked then.

"War news, I suppose you mean," I said, "and submarines. Nothing that you have not seen; a submarine in Hampton Roads about a week ago. But that report was in all the papers. No doubt Jimmy has given you later news."

"I believe that all boats were sent out from Newport in a hurry last Sunday. I have heard nothing since. I wonder," he continued, smiling, "if whales have not something to do with these reports — or sharks. I hear that there has been a great slaughter of whales in the North Sea in the last three years."

"Whales have no periscopes."

"They may yet develop them in self-defence if this keeps on long enough. But I would not cast doubt.

You see my boat out there. What do you think of the color?"

She was all gray, and has been so for some time.

"Why, it is a good color if you like it. She looks like a lump of lead. I cannot see why the navy does not paint its ships some lighter shade, with streaks of greens and blues and purples and some white here and there. Those are the colors that the water shows, although the water is of a different color in every different light. But I would be willing to guarantee that I could do better than that — much better."

He looked at me thoughtfully. "That is worth thinking of, Adam. I am sure you could do better. You could n't do much worse if the idea is concealment." He chuckled. "You know the water and its colors. How would you like to do it?"

"Why, I don't know," I said slowly. "I have never thought of it. The fact is," I blurted out, and choked upon my words. Why should I confess to Old Goodwin what I had been unwilling to confess to myself? But the impulse was too strong. "The fact is," I began again more quietly, "I am not satisfied. I cannot be content to till the ground — which any Western Islander could do as well or better — and to moon upon my bluff when every one I know is doing more. Could you?"

He smiled and shook his head. "I could not in your place. But come out to my boat with me. I want to show you the changes I have made."

So we went in his tender which was lying at his landing with her men in her, that had been waiting for us. And on the way out he asked me casually and seemingly without interest, how I liked steamers; and he had his gaze fixed upon his great vessel as though he had an affection for her.

"They are good for getting somewhere quickly," I answered him, "if you mean such as yours. For the rest, one might as well be in some great modern hotel on an island in the midst of the sea. There is no more pleasure in them. Now tell me, is there?"

He laughed a hearty laugh. "I can well imagine, Adam, the pleasure you would have in being in a great hotel, whether it was in the midst of the sea or in the midst of the city, But I have had some pleasure in that boat. I have some regard for her."

"Then I ask your pardon," I said, "for the answer that I gave. I should have said other. But what I meant was clear enough. A sailing vessel is a living thing, and each has ways of her own. You feel her response to each movement of the wheel or each change of sail or trim of sheet, and that response is sometimes willing and sometimes unwilling. She is like a woman, responding instantly and gladly to a man who persuades her with sympathy and understanding, and doing her best; while to a man without true understanding of her she is reluctant and contrary and stubborn. I have no experience in vessels of size, but you can ask Captain Fergus."

He laughed again. "Fergus is of the same opinion," he said. "But what I meant to ask was whether you have experience of steamers."

I shook my head.

"Too bad," he said, and sighed. "A steamer is a living thing too, I think, but less like a woman; going straight where she is going like a man; more straightforward. I like a steamer well enough. But Fergus agrees with you. And Fergus has to go in a steamer, and it almost breaks his heart. He is to command her." And he waved at the huge hull towering above us, for we were at the gangway.

I was following after him up the steps.

"And is Captain Fergus in the navy?" I asked.

"In the Reserve. He has been since the beginning. They were only waiting for a ship."

"And the Arcadia?"

He turned and smiled. "She is enrolled too, but it is a secret. I don't know why a secret."

So that explained her activities. There might be other secrets; and I thought of Elizabeth and Bobby. Elizabeth could be trusted to keep a secret well, and Bobby knew it. And Elizabeth had been away much of the time for two weeks or more, always going in the Arcadia wherever she went, but usually home for the night. By "home" I mean our house. I thought she was but a guest of Mrs. Fergus, but there might be some other explanation. It did not matter. Elizabeth was Elizabeth, and

Eve rejoiced to see her face with its crown of beaver-colored hair, and her calm and smiling eyes. I have not yet decided what is the color of her eyes, but they suit Eve.

And I looked up, and I saw the Arcadia just stretching her sails as a man will stretch his arms and legs in preparation for the using of them. She had been there all night. And I saw that noble yacht of Pukkie's casting off from the stage in the little harbor of Old Goodwin's, and Pukkie and Elizabeth in her. And Pukkie saw me — he had been waiting to catch my eye — and they both waved to me as the boat caught the wind and stood out of the harbor. She was tiny, that yacht of Pukkie's, but she was complete; as complete as the Arcadia. Indeed, she was not unlike her, save that one was a schooner and the other a sloop. To see that boat of Pukkie's out upon the water with no other near enough to compare them, you might think she was of any size, even a big boat — until you saw the two huddled in the cockpit or one of them stretched upon the deck, almost covering it.

"See," I said to Old Goodwin, "there goes Pukkie."

He stood at the head of the gangway, and he smiled a happy smile.

"I see. He will go near all the lobster buoys, and the fish traps, and the rocks uncovered by the tide, and pretend that they are submarines. He has told me. And he pretends that the Yankee is a vessel that has been sunk by a submarine. What it is to be a boy!"

"And what are we but boys?" I said. "We pretend that there are submarines in all the waters from Montauk to Chatham, and we go about looking for them. It is much more satisfactory to have something that you can see, as Pukkie has, — and just as useful, so long as we must pretend. Submarines! They well-nigh turn me sick."

He laughed. "They turn many sick."

"Sick at heart," I said, "looking for what is not. We might request — through the proper diplomatic channels — that Germany send some over, one for each district."

He laughed again. "It would relieve the monotony, and put spirit into our men. Imagine Fergus if there were any. He is a war-horse."

And he led the way, waving some officer aside, and took me through the boat and showed me everything. He had made changes. I should not have known it for the same boat. The staterooms, that had been palatial, had been divided, but were large in their new state; and new quarters had been provided for the crew, who would be twice as many men as he had ever carried; and she had been strengthened for the mountings of the guns. Many other changes had been made, but it was these that he lingered over. They had been some months in making the changes, and he had carried a small army of mechanics about with him.

He had been showing me the officers' quarters for the third time, and at last he turned away.

"I am given to understand," he observed, "that any recommendations I may make will receive due consideration. Fergus is made a commander, but there are vacancies."

He meant me, of course. The finger of destiny always points at me. It was as much as an offer, but I should have been ashamed to accept it. A man should enroll, and then let the navy do what they will with him. Of course he should; but that is ascribing all wisdom to the men who have all power. They are but men, and have not all wisdom; they are but men as we are, and some of them a little less.

I smiled. "I am sorry," I said, "that I know nothing of steamers and the running of them, or I should be tempted to try for one of the vacancies. I do not suppose I could qualify for anything; a coal-passer, or even a third-class quartermaster perhaps, no better. And I should not like to have fingers of scorn pointed at me as being the admiral's pet or something of the kind. It would smack of politics and influence."

Old Goodwin laughed. "It is not an improper use of influence to point out a man's virtues," he answered, "but quite proper. The authorities do not know you, but I do, and I consider you well qualified. The knowledge of your duties you could pick up soon enough. You could pass the examination for a lieutenant's commission in two weeks. I would not be afraid to promise it. You can navigate, Adam."

I nodded. "I wish it could be done.

But you forget that I am forty-three. They don't want men of forty-three."

"It might be done," he said. "Fergus is forty-four, but many years a master. It might be done, but if you don't want —"

I interrupted him. "You forget Eve. She is a pacifist — as bad as Cecily."

He smiled. "Eve is not so much a pacifist — nor Cecily. I would not worry about Eve."

That was news to me — if he was right. And I did want to do something, if only to restore my self-respect, that was well-nigh gone from me. It was but to find that something that I could do better than another, if such there was.

"I will think about it," I said.

"Do," he returned, "and so will I.

It may be that this vessel is not the place for you. I should like it better if there was something that would keep you here or hereabouts — and so would Eve. It should be something that no one else can do."

I laughed and said nothing. What was there for me to say? But my laugh had no merriment in it. It was simple: I had but to find that which I could do and no one else; but stay — it must be useful in the present case. And I laughed again savagely, and I looked up, and there was the Rattlesnake anchored beside the Arcadia.

"They are well in time for the clambake," I remarked, "although they have digged no clams."

For this was the day of Ogilvie's farewell. He had written Eve, and she had got the note the day before;

and all the afternoon I had been busy with getting my supplies, and in the early morning of this day we had digged the clams. It was but a remnant of my company that gathered there, only Old Goodwin and Eve and Elizabeth and Cecily and me — and Captain Fergus. I almost forgot Captain Fergus, but he dug few clams. The burden of the day fell upon Old Goodwin and me. Jimmy and Bobby and Ogilvie and Tom and Mrs. Fergus and Olivia were absent. And now there was naught to do but to start the bake. Old Goodwin and I went in silence to the tender, and ashore.

"Think hard," said Old Goodwin as I was leaving him. "There must be something."

"If only we can find it," I returned. "I have little hope."

He smiled his old smile of peace. "I have much," he said. "I can take you over to Newport on any day you wish. I will be over to help you with the bake."

Our clambake was a good clambake, and the clams were good, being fresh-digged and well baked, and the lobsters tender, being small—indeed, I was glad that no inspectors from the police boat were there to measure them. I did not measure them, being well enough content to take the word of the fishermen. And the chickens were good and all things else; but there was something lacking, something wrong, and that something was in the spirits of the guests. Old Goodwin was cheerful, and Elizabeth seemed cheerful enough, and Jimmy; but upon the spirits of the rest of us there sat an incubus. Ogilvie said but little, and Bobby was restless and discontented. He had hard work to sit still long enough to eat; and thereafter he wandered to and fro like a lost soul, standing at the edge of the bluff and looking out moodily, then wandering over to my garden and regarding it critically, then back to the pine, taking his knife from out his pocket and tapping it upon the table, then wandering aimlessly to the clump of trees, then to the bluff again.

My garden is not on exhibition. It is not weedless, as Judson's used to be, but is for use; and it is not to be regarded critically. And the tapping of knives on the smooth pine planks of the table is not to be commended. I came very near speaking to him about it, and then I saw Eve watching Bobby with an anxious look, and I caught for an instant a glimpse of Elizabeth's eyes. They hurt me. It was but for an instant, then she veiled them, and the lights played upon them. She was watching Bobby too.

So we got through an uncomfortable afternoon, and it came time for them to go. Eve had Jack Ogilvie by himself at the edge of the bluff, and they talked earnestly, and he took her hand and smiled his pleasant smile, and they came back to us. Bobby was tapping his knife upon the smooth pine boards.

'I envy you, Jack," he said, heaving a tremendous sigh. "I'll be there too, if there is any way." He turned suddenly to Old Goodwin. "Can't you say a word for me? What is the use of influential relatives, anyway?"

And Old Goodwin laughed. "They are of little use, Bobby. And I am surprised that you are willing to use influence in such a matter."

And he looked at me and winked.

"Use influence!" Bobby cried under his breath. "I'd use anything—a crowbar, if that would get me there."

Then they said their farewells, and Bobby shook hands with Eve and me, but not with Elizabeth. She stood there, her hands hanging at her sides, and a smile upon her lips, — not in her eyes,—while Bobby turned away.

But he turned back again as if it were against his will and some great force turned him.

"Good-bye, Elizabeth," he said low, and he half held out his hand.

She went forward quickly. "Good-bye, Bobby," she said.

And Bobby gripped her hand so that it must have hurt, and held it long and hard. Then he flung it from him as I had seen him do once before, and strode away abruptly, and ran down the steep path after the others. Elizabeth came back to us smiling — with her lips and eyes and heart; and Eve kissed her suddenly, and she laughed and cast down her eyes, and they went in together.

I stood upon the edge of my bluff when the sun was low in the west, and I watched the colors that the Great Painter spread upon the still waters. And I saw again that little strip of marsh below me, each grass stem standing straight and motionless and dark in the still water, but each stem was edged with greenish gold. Little waves rippled in — from some boat out in the harbor — and the grass stems rippled gently with it, and the bars of gold upon the waves and the waving lines of gold upon the grass stems advanced with it until the wave broke upon the store. I looked out to see what boat it was, and it was Ogilvie's, and he stood and gazed and waved to me, and I waved back, and then I bethought me of my signalling. So I waved my arms like a semaphore gone mad, and I sent him a message in farewell; and he understood, and thanked me and sent a farewell to Eve. Then he was gone out into the pearl-gray of the coming twilight, and his gray boat was lost in the gray of sky and sea.

I looked down at the little marsh. The grass was still again, and two blackbirds flew across it. I saw the red shoulders of one as he guided his waving flight, and the grass stems standing up darkly above the bright water, as if they were set in glass. It seemed infinitely beautiful and sweet, and infinitely sad.

I was wakened in the night by a noise outside our window; a little noise, as if somebody were trying not to make it. A greater noise, one made as if by right, would not have awakened me. And I took a stick that I have — a straight hickory handle for a sledge fits the hand well, and makes an admirable weapon — and I went out, thinking of German spies. There was no moon, but I saw him. My spy was doing nothing but gazing up at the window, and I came upon him from behind and caught him by the collar. That collar was stiff with braid.

He turned quickly and wrenched himself free.

"What do you mean, Adam," he asked, "by your murderous assault upon a peaceful relative?"

It was Bobby. "You 're no relative of mine," I said. "What are you doing, anyway? Don't you know that the window you are gazing at is mine — Eve's and mine?"

"All the windows in the house are yours, are n't they?" he growled. "And I 'm not looking at any window. But why can't I if I want to? Answer me that."

There was no answer to that. "It is lucky," I observed, "that I keep no dog — a dog like Burdon's. I think of getting one."

Bobby laughed at that. Burdon had a great dog, a vicious beast, which amused himself one day by chasing Burdon into the hencoop, growling and snarling savagely. He kept him there for hours until there came along a boy who had owned the dog until his father decided that the dog was too vicious and gave him to Burdon. The boy seized the dog by the collar, and dragged him away and chained him, and told Burdon that he could come out.

"Don't you do it, Adam," Bobby said. "Think how you would feel if you came out and found only my mangled remains. And I am doing no harm — only wandering about."

So he was but wandering about. He should have been in bed. And we stood there and talked for a few minutes, and Bobby wandered off to my steep path and down to the shore, and I heard the sound of great pebbles rolling, and I heard him whistling softly some mournful air. I went in and to bed. Elizabeth sleeps in the room down the hall, and her windows are around the corner. I heard a little noise from her room as I turned into mine.

X

ONE morning — it was the first of August, the middle of that hot week — I was sitting on the seat under my great pine, and Eve sat beside me. I was waiting for Elizabeth, for the time had come again for the Arcadia to be about her mysterious business on the sea, and this time I was to go. It was what Elizabeth called "transferring" something or somebody. What it was and where it was I was to find out. I wished that Eve was going—and Pukkie. I said as much.

"Elizabeth has not asked us," she replied. "I could not go if I were asked, for I promised to go to mother's. She has one of her bad turns. But Pukkie would love it."

I murmured my regret at Mrs. Goodwin's illness. Her illnesses are not serious and do not last long, and the cause of them is not far to seek. She eats most heartily and takes no exercise, and that practice ever bred illness. I would have her mowing for remedy.

Eve slipped her hand within my arm and clasped the other over it.

"Adam," she said, giving my arm a gentle squeeze, "what is it that is troubling you? Something does. It has for a long time."

Now that was what I did not expect, that Eve should think me troubled, for I thought that I had been most careful. But I should have known better. Eve always knows. And the thing that had been troubling me more than any other was that I had not thought of that no one else could do but I.

I looked down into her eyes, and I saw there many things; but love and longing most of all, the longing to comfort me if she could but lay her finger on the hurt.

I smiled. "It is not so bad as that," I said.

"Well, kiss me, Adam," she said, "and tell me."

I obeyed orders — or part of them.

"On the day of the draft," I said, "I was in the village, and I saw all the inhabitants assembled, and they scanned each batch of numbers as the news came, but not a third of them knew what their own numbers were. Some did, and I saw two that were drafted. One of the two went out from that assembly with eyes that saw nothing, looking as if he went to his execution. The other laughed, and said that that settled it, and he was glad. And tell me if you can the answer to my riddle — which has nothing to do with the assembly in the village — and say what there is that I can do, but no one else."

She laughed. "Is that the matter? And must the thing be useful? I know several things that no one else can do, but they are not useful. If it must be useful, — well, — I cannot think of it at this moment, but I have no doubt I shall." She leaned forward, and tried to look into my eyes; and failing that, she shook me. "What is the nature of this thing that you must do? Look at me, and tell me."

I was afraid to look at her lest she

guess, and I was not ready to tell her. I might never be ready.

"It is nothing, Eve," I said: "nothing of importance. It is not worth a minute's worry." And that was true too.

"Foist it upon somebody else then," she answered quickly. "There are persons to decide those things."

I looked at her then. "I cannot believe that I get your meaning. You could not know. Truly there are persons to decide those things, but Heaven knows whether they are competent to decide anything. No doubt they would cheerfully and light-heartedly consign me to — what I should not do."

I stopped abruptly. I had almost told her that which I had determined not to tell her — yet. I looked into her eyes, and there I saw laughter and joy and hope and great love; and I saw the same tender wistfulness that I had seen so many times in the past weeks. But joy and laughter conquered.

"I hear Elizabeth coming," she said, "and I hope you may read your riddle. Now we must be most proper. Are you proper, Adam?"

And Elizabeth came while I was yet straightening my hair, and getting it into a comfortable condition. It feels most uncomfortable when it is rumpled and each separate hair taking a different direction, like the brush that is used to black the stove. It feels as that brush looks.

Elizabeth laughed at me unfeelingly. And she turned to Eve. But people always turn to Eve. "I'm going to take Pukkie, Eve, if you don't mind. Captain Fergus did not ask him, but I'm going to take him anyway. I've told him."

And Eve smiled and said nothing, and we started, and Pukkie came running, his face expressing his delight. And when we were in the launch and starting from the landing, Eve wished me once more the proper reading of my riddle, and she threw a kiss to us, and stood there until we were aboard the Arcadia; then we saw her wending up the slope toward the great house.

The sails were already hoisted and the anchor hove short. Elizabeth and Captain Fergus and Pukkie and I were settled in chairs along the rail, and the crew went about their business so quickly and so quietly that the first I knew of our being under way was the gentle canting of the deck beneath my feet. We had slipped out.

The wind was very light, but it was making rapidly, and there was a long, heaving swell from the Atlantic — perhaps two hundred feet from crest to crest — which made the big Arcadia pitch gently and bury her bow to the eyes. At last one of these seas, higher than most of those which made up the great procession, crept up higher yet and slopped over upon the deck. And her bows rose, and there was a rush of water along the deck, and there came the noise of falling water from hawse pipes and scuppers.

Pukkie laughed with delight, and Captain Fergus looked up.

"Crack on," he said; and they set more sail.

Presently there came another of those mighty rollers. She took it over her bows, a flood of green water, and it came roaring aft. Again there was the sound of many waters, more mighty yet, as hawse pipes and scuppers spouted forth their loads.

Captain Fergus looked up at the masts. "Crack on," he said again. And he got up and wandered to and fro across the deck, gazing up at the masts and at the men setting the light sails.

"She'd do better," he said, stopping for an instant by my chair, "if I had n't had to put that confounded engine in her. You would n't believe what a drag a screw is, even when it is feathering."

She was doing well enough. All her light sails were set, and she was furnished forth with all her frills and furbelows, so that there was no place where she could carry another stitch. She bent to her business and sailed. And Captain Fergus smiled a smile of satisfaction — in spite of that dragging screw.

Pukkie had left his comfortable chair, and was leaning against my knee, saying nothing, but looking back at me now and then, his face a study. It was a pleasure just to watch him. Captain Fergus seemed to find it so, and Elizabeth had been watching him for some time.

"Come, young man," Captain Fergus said suddenly. "Don't you want to walk a while with me — to pace the deck with measured tread, while what-you-may-call-it on the dead? Eh?"

And Pukkie smiled more than ever — if that were possible — and jumped and joined him; and they walked — paced the deck with measured tread for some time in solemn silence. Captain Fergus would glance aloft, and Pukkie would glance aloft; and at last I smiled and Elizabeth laughed.

"Don't you feel like pacing the deck with measured tread?" I asked.

And she got up as if she had been sitting on a spring, and we paced the deck in solemn silence behind those other two.

Captain Fergus turned suddenly. "This young man ought to have a uniform," he said. "I've got one that he could wear. Steward!"

And the steward, having come instantly and received his instructions, vanished below, and immediately reappeared, bearing an ensign's coat and cap. These were fitted upon my son. They were too large, but he could wear them.

"But, Captain Fergus," said Elizabeth, laughing, "the regulations!"

"Jigger the regulations!" remarked Captain Fergus, smiling. "I pay mighty little attention to regulations when I'm on my own vessel. Pukkie's my first officer."

My little son beamed at this, and turned to show me his uniform.

"When you command that yacht of Mr. Goodwin's," said Elizabeth, "you'll have to pay some attention to the regulations."

"Have to sleep in my uniform, like as not," Captain Fergus growled.

"According to the order we are not to unbutton a button of the coat on any occasion. If that does n't mean sleep in your uniform, what does it mean?"

"You can't have Pukkie for your first officer then," Elizabeth pursued. "Can you?"

"I suppose not. Probably some yachting chaps who have been prominent socially and got their pictures in the papers. I hope not, though. There are some good men in the Reserve. I only hope they may give me men who have had experience in steamers. I don't want any of these pets who have commissions merely because they had influence, or because they were rich enough to give a boat."

I said nothing. I had the light that

I was looking for, although it did not illumine my problem, but was what I had supposed it would be. After all, if a man do but use the sense that God gave him and stand by his judgments, he will do well enough. I would have none of Old Goodwin's steamer. What was I, to be officer on a great steamer? I might command a rowboat, or a yacht like Pukkie's if need were.

"You do not have a very high opinion," I said, "of the navy?"

"What?" he said. "High opinion? Oh, yes, I have. Good men and fine vessels, many of them. It's a sailor's right to growl at the service he's in. You must n't take what he says too seriously."

"Would you advise a man to enroll in the navy?"

"Depends on the man. If he has a taste for the sea, he'd be more contented in the navy than in the army, but many men have a strong distaste for it. I'd advise your man to get the best rank he can, and to have no modesty about it. If he does n't get it some other fellow will who is not troubled by modesty."

And Captain Fergus took up his pacing the deck again, and Pukkie walked beside him, taking as long a stride as he could. Elizabeth watched them, a smile of affection in her eyes.

"Is n't he fine in his uniform?" she whispered. "But he would be happier if he could wear his old blue coat and his old blue cap."

He was fine, and he looked the sailor and the fighter. But I knew that old blue coat and that old blue cap, hanging in his cabin. The sun had shone caressingly upon them many times, and seemed to like them almost as well as he liked them; and they had changed their colors, as everything does under the caresses of the sun, until they were blue no longer, but of a purplish cast, shot with red.

The wind grew, as winds will, until two or three in the afternoon, and the sea grew with it, but always there were those great rollers coming in from the Atlantic. And the Arcadia was doing her twelve knots, bowing majestically and buffeting the great seas, tearing the tops from them and sending sheets of spray, which rattled upon her deck or upon the surface of the water like hail; and the water hissed past the rail, and there was the gentle cluck of blocks, deep in their throats, with the heave of the sea, and there was the sound of wind in the rigging and of ropes beating on taut sails. Altogether it made glad my heart; and Elizabeth seemed to like it, and Pukkie's heart was swollen almost to bursting. And the captain paced to and fro, saying nothing, or he stood by the rail looking out over the waters, his cap pulled down low, an unquenchable light in his deep blue eyes and a happy smile on his lips.

We had passed the colored cliffs of Gay Head shining in the sun, and we were passing Nomansland, and the great rollers were greater yet. There was fog out beyond, lying in wait. Captain Fergus nodded to Elizabeth.

"Better see if we can pick them up," he said.

She turned to go below, and stopped at the companionway.

"Look," she said.

We looked where she pointed. There, on the surface of the sea, about two miles away, was some great thing glistening in the sun, the water washing over it. A thick haze, or the advance guard of the fog, made it hard to see anything clearly except the glisten of the sun.

"Oh," cried Pukkie, "I see it. Is it a submarine?" And he looked up at the captain.

"More likely a whale," the captain answered, smiling; "but we will see."

And the course of the Arcadia was changed a little so that she was heading straight for it. She kept on for it, and now and then the sunlight caught it and made it to shine like the windows of a house at sunset, and again it was a dark body with the water washing over it, and we could scarcely make it out, lying there in the sea. As we approached my breath came quicker and my eyes glistened, and I smiled. I know it, for Elizabeth glanced at me and laughed. It was a mysterious thing, lying there in that thick haze. It seemed as if it might be a submarine, although reason told me it was not.

"What do you mean to do?" I asked.

"Ram him," answered the captain promptly, "if it is a submarine and we can get there in time. A fast sailing vessel is better, for he could hear our screw. But it is no submarine.

It looks more like a vessel's bilge. There! Ha!"

The glistening body moved, and great flukes suddenly reared on high, and the body disappeared.

"A sleeping whale," Captain Fergus observed. "Another submarine report gone wrong."

"Are there any over here?"

"Not now, I am reasonably sure. Don't believe there will be, although I may be mistaken. They can use them to better advantage on the other side. But there may be, in time, unless Germany blows up first. We don't know what is happening in Germany. They may blow up at any minute, and they may not. Should n't be surprised — and I should n't be surprised if they kept going for a year or two longer. Look at the Russian army, just got well going and they have mutiny and lose it all. Too bad! I'd like to see any crew of mine try it!"

Elizabeth laughed and went below, and Captain Fergus began again his walking to and fro. Presently Elizabeth came up and spoke to him, and the course was changed, and in an hour we had sighted a steamer making for us.

It was the Rattlesnake; and the two vessels lay quiet on that rolling sea while our tender went over with a package of papers, and came back with Bobby. And the Rattlesnake turned about and we soon lost her in the haze, and we turned about and headed for home.

Bobby was not talkative on the way back. Indeed, Bobby has not been himself for some weeks; not the Bobby that I knew of old. I cannot fix the date at which the change occurred, but it was some date that had to do with Elizabeth. Every date has to do with Elizabeth, so far as he is concerned. And though he spoke to her when he came over the side — spoke gravely, I suppose he thought — it seemed more like petulance to me — he said no word more to her, but sat in his chair and gazed moodily out over the water. And Elizabeth sat in her chair, and she gazed at Bobby under lowered lids, and she smiled her smile of suppressed amusement. And presently, her thoughts being unguarded, she raised her lids a little, so that I saw all the lights of the sea playing in her eyes, that were yet regarding Bobby, and there came into them a tender light that was more than all the light on sea and sky. And she glanced at me, and she saw that I had seen, and she flushed slowly, and got up and went below.

"Bobby," I said, "are you not ashamed of yourself?"

He started. "Ashamed of myself?" he answered, looking at the companionway down which Elizabeth had disappeared. "No doubt I should be. I do things enough to be ashamed of. But why?"

"You have not seemed to notice the honor that has befallen my family. My son is made ensign or lieutenant commander or something, and you have not remarked the event. I am afraid that you have hurt his feelings."

Bobby laughed as though he was relieved.

"So he is — ensign or something, as you say. And I did not observe it. I ask his pardon, Adam, and yours." And he called to Pukkie, who was following Captain Fergus about like a pet dog; and Pukkie came, and Bobby felicitated him upon his promotion. And Pukkie smiled until I feared lest his face crack.

"It is a trifle large," Bobby remarked, referring to the uniform, "but he will grow to it."

"It is not so much too large as it was," I said. "You should have seen him swell — like a toad-grunter."

"Daddy," protested the aggrieved Pukkie, "I'm not like a toad-grunter."

The toad-grunter is a much despised fish.

"No, Puk," said Bobby, "you're not. I think your father should apologize."

"I apologize, Pukkie," I said hastily, for I would not wound my son. "You are not. And, Bobby, can't you find any? Is that why you are out of sorts?"

"Find any what?" asked Bobby, puzzled. "Any toad-grunters? I hope not. Who wants to find 'em? You speak in riddles, Adam."

"It was submarines I meant."

Bobby smiled seraphically. "Your traps, Adam, are no good. But I'm going to find some submarines pretty soon. Pret — ty soon, you mark my words."

"Words marked. But what do you mean?"

"What I say. Now, Puk, what do

you say to a walk about the deck? Or would you rather follow your captain?"

And Bobby strolled off with Pukkie. They went up forward, where the Arcadia was shouldering aside the great seas. We had the wind on the quarter, and there was no longer the sound of spray like rolling musketry. And presently Elizabeth looked out of the companionway, and seeing me alone, she came and sat in the chair next to mine, and she put out her hand.

"Adam," she said with a pretty flush.

"Elizabeth," I answered, with no flush, but I watched hers flaming.

"Adam, don't you tell," she said, looking shyly at me. Elizabeth is not given to shy looks, but to honest ones, eye to eye. "Promise me that you will never tell. Give me your hand on it."

I took her hand. It was a pretty hand and soft enough, with tapering fingers, but it was not such a pretty hand as Eve's.

"Elizabeth," I said to her, "I do not know anything to tell—anything that would be of interest. But—but you do not mind if I tell Eve, do you? And," I finished lamely enough, "I hope it — it will."

She laughed and sighed, and gave my hand a squeeze.

"Thank you," she said. "But Eve knows, I think."

Captain Fergus was standing by the rail, sniffing the wind and gazing out at the waters, and at the little swirls of foam that raced by, and at the bank of fog that chased us in. He was happy. I almost envied him. He had done his part, and he was doing it.

"Will you walk?" I asked Elizabeth. And we got up and walked, saying nothing.

The afternoon passed, and the wind died. As we drew near to the lighthouse that stands like a sentinel on its rock just within the entrance to the bay, the sun was far down in the west, the breeze was but the gentlest breath, and the surface of the water moved in slow, oily undulations. I stood with Elizabeth close beside the rail, and we gazed at the water that was red and gold.

The shadow of the tall lighthouse was thrown high on the sails, and passed slowly aft. The red sun was sitting on a distant hill bearded with cedars. The little oily waves were splotched with vermilion and blue and purple and gold, and the gold dazzled our eyes.

Not a ripple marked our passage. I gazed at the red sun, and he gazed back at me; and his red disc was half down behind the hill, and I could see it sink. And the sun sank behind the hill and had winked his last, and a broad smooch of red lay upon the western horizon. We watched the red fade to orange, then to saffron and to green, while two little saffron clouds with edges of flame floated high above, and the fog crept in stealthily below. And I heard Elizabeth sigh, and I looked down and she looked up.

"If you find this sad," I said, "and

as if it were the end of all things, turn about. The sight will fill your soul with peace."

So we turned about. And the sky toward the east was of a lovely soft, warm pearl-gray, and the water the same pearl-gray with tints of rose and of a light blue here and there. The distance was veiled in an impalpable haze, and water and sky merged into a soft grayish blur toward the horizon, as if smeared with a dry brush. The water, gray with its rose tints and its blue, seemed to dimple softly, like a baby smiling as it sank to sleep. It soothed my soul; it was the very breath of peace.

I heard another sigh beside me, and I turned, and there was Bobby.

"Submarines in that!" he said, and smiled.

We began to turn slowly, and were come to our anchorage, and there was Old Goodwin's great steamer not far away, and Old Goodwin himself, with Eve, on his landing, waiting for us.

As we were about to go ashore, Captain Fergus spoke to me.

"About that man of yours," he said. "Tell him to go to Newport, and to put himself in their hands over there. It is the best thing he can do."

And I thanked him, and said I would tell my man. And we were walking from the landing, Old Goodwin and I and Eve — Bobby had to walk with Elizabeth, with Pukkie between them, for there was none other thing that he could do, but they said nothing that I could hear.

"I am going to take Cecily over to Newport to-morrow," Old Goodwin observed. "She has not seen Tom for five days. Don't you want to come along, Adam?"

XI

THERE must have been a conspiracy against my happiness — or for it, perhaps; but Eve seemed only mildly interested. So I made some excuse to her — I do not like to make excuses to Eve — and I went to Newport with Old Goodwin and Cecily. Eve could not go. She did not say why.

Cecily kept us late in Newport, trying to get a glimpse of Tom. We had got a glimpse of him, dressed in a sailor suit and driving some admiral or other in a big gray car, but he would not look at us, and that did not satisfy Cecily. But she was not discouraged, and we left her to the pursuit of her quarry, and we went about our business, that took some time. Then, after a long search, we found Cecily talking to Tom beside his car. That admiral of his did not appear for hours, and Cecily would not leave until he did, so we left them alone together on the curbstone, and we waited around the next corner. We did not get home until nearly eight, and Old Goodwin took us to his house for dinner, and there were Eve and Elizabeth and Bobby.

It was a good dinner, as was fitting for Old Goodwin's house, and when it was over we all wandered out upon the piazza where stands the telescope, and from which we could see out upon the bay. This part of the piazza is like another room, with many rugs upon the floor, and tables and comfortable chairs; and it is lighted at night — dimly, to be sure, and but so much as lets one see easily where he is going, if he is going, and descry the faces of the others sitting there. But that is for those who are gone blind in the dark. I am not blind in the dark, but I can see well enough if I am but out of doors, where there is always light enough to see where one is going. It is only lights that blind me. I do not like lights out of doors. Besides, on this night there was a reddish moon hanging rather low in the southeast, with wisps of fog driving under it. I have forgotten my astronomy, — thank heaven! — which would tell me why the moon sometimes pursues her course high overhead and sometimes low toward the horizon. The moon is no friend of mine anyway, and I care not at all where she goes, or whether her course is from west to east or north to south, or whether she shine at all. But on this night she shone bravely for the time, and there would have been light enough with no other.

So we sat there for some time in silence, feeling pleasant and satisfied because we had just dined well, and Old Goodwin smoked his cigar, and Bobby and I smoked our pipes. And I was becoming less and less pleasant and satisfied with those lights above me, and Bobby was getting restless, being seized with curious alternations of restless nervousness and pleasant satisfaction. Eve seemed to be satisfied enough, and Elizabeth sat motionless, her hands in her lap, and a half-smile on her lips. I could not see her eyes, but she seemed to be watching.

There had been some desultory talk, and the lights had become too much for me, and I had wandered out with Eve into a sort of balcony that had no lights. And we sat — closer together than we could have sat if the balcony had been lighted — and Eve's hand came searching for mine that was already searching for hers, and we clasped our fingers close, and we looked out at the waters of the bay that sparkled dimly, and at the tapering band of moonlight that widened to a broad circle under the moon, and at the riding lights of the Arcadia and of Old Goodwin's great steamer, — a great dark shape. Fog hung about. It would be in presently.

"Tell me, Adam," said Eve softly. "What did you see at Newport?"

"Tom," I answered. "He's a sight in his sailor suit."

She laughed. "Of course; but nothing to what you would be. We're very fond of Tom, are n't we, and of Cecily? What else?"

"The beach and the town and the cliffs and the training station and the new barracks and many vessels at anchor."

"Exasperating!" And she shook me. "Did n't you go into the War College?"

"We did. Your father seems to know many there."

"Adam," said Eve, "are n't you going to tell me?"

She bent forward and looked up into my eyes, and I looked down into hers. I kissed her.

"I will tell you, Eve. Never fear.

When you look at me like that, I would tell anything. I tell you everything sooner or later."

"I like it sooner."

"I have some fear that you will not like it."

"If you have done it, Adam, I shall like it. If I do not like it, you will never know it. Tell me. You did not go to view the country. I know that well enough."

"Well," I began, and stopped, somewhat troubled. Scraps of talk had drifted out to us, now and then, from that room we had left, and by turning we could get a glimpse of one or another, sitting in the dim yellow light.

Bobby had just said something, and then there fell a sudden silence—absolute silence. It was the silence that stopped me, and I cast back over my unconscious recollection to see if I knew what he had said. And the things that had happened in there in the last minute took gradual shape in my mind, as things sometimes do that are heard with the ear but not consciously noted. Old Goodwin had asked Bobby some question, I know not what, and Bobby had answered him in a dull, dead sort of voice. I recalled the voice because it was strange for Bobby to use it; but he had done many strange things. What had he said in that dull, indifferent voice that sounded as if all that he cared for were destroyed utterly? I had it, and so did Eve. It had not taken a half a minute. He had announced that he was to go to England and join a destroyer.

No one had spoken in that half-minute, and I peeked through at Elizabeth. She was sitting as she had been for some time, the same half-smile upon her lips, her hands in her lap; but I saw that her hands were clasped together and every muscle tense.

"Rather sudden news, Bobby," said Cecily at last. "You don't seem as glad as I should have supposed you would be."

"Oh, yes," Bobby answered, "I'm glad enough. I've had enough of chasing phantoms. There are no submarines over here. I have some reason to believe that it is different over there. There is nothing, I think," he added rather bitterly, "to keep me over here — no reason why I should not be glad to go."

Again that silence fell. I saw Elizabeth's hands twisting slightly, clasped in her lap.

"What vessel do you join?" Cecily asked. "And when do you go?"

"I don't know the vessel," he said, "and I'm sorry that I am not permitted to tell you when I go. But it will be soon. There are troops going to France. I suppose I should not tell that, but I trust there are no spies here." And he laughed shortly.

Elizabeth had said nothing, nor made any movement, but she had sat as motionless as a statue — if one had not observed her hands. Now she rose slowly, as if weary with sitting still, and she wandered slowly from one thing to another, and seemed not to find comfort in any; and she was come near the door, and passed out, and we heard her light step going slowly along the piazza behind us and down some steps in the distance. Then I turned back, and I looked out at the moonlight on the quiet water, and at the great dark shape with its anchor light and a light or two more shining through some portholes, and her decks white under the moon.

I turned to Eve, for I would have spoken; but she laid her finger on my lips, and she pressed my arm, and would not let me lean forward. And I heard a faint rustling, but very faint, and I saw the tops of a great clump of bushes move in order, as if some creature — some person — moved along behind them; and there was not wind enough to stir them. Those bushes were very near to us, almost in front of us. And the movement of the bushes stopped, and everything was still, and the veiled moon shone down, making gray and ghostly everything that its half-light shone upon, and casting black shadows.

Bobby had become uneasy, and he had risen and was wandering slowly about, as Elizabeth had done; and at last he was come to the door, and he bolted through it, and we heard his light footsteps running along the piazza behind us. Bobby was a runner when he was in college, and he ran with no noise. And he took the steps at a leap, and I heard a faint chuckle from Old Goodwin.

Then nothing happened for a long time, and I could feel Eve laughing silently, and I knew that Bobby was ramping about the place, looking for somebody that he found not. It was as bad as chasing submarines. And at last the bushes moved again, and I heard Bobby's voice whispering, "Elizabeth! Elizabeth! Where are you?" And the bushes near us shivered, and there came a gasp, and somebody started to run, but Bobby caught her. I could see nothing, but I could imagine his catching her by both hands, and I could hear. I could not help hearing.

"Oh!" she gasped; and "Oh!" again.

Then he seemed to catch her close.

"Elizabeth!" he whispered. "Elizabeth! I give up. It's unconditional surrender, Elizabeth. I've fought against it, but it's no use. I don't care what you are if you'll only love me."

Elizabeth was between laughter and tears.

"Even if I am a German spy, Bobby?"

"Even if you're a German spy," he whispered fiercely. "But you're not. You could n't be. You're too honest — and true."

"Honest and true, Bobby," Elizabeth whispered, clinging to him — I guessed. "But you don't know what a woman can do. If I were a German spy, I should be doing just this — to worm your secrets out of you."

There was a silence.

"Do it again," he said, " — German spy!"

She did it again — I guessed.

"I'm only," she whispered, half-crying on his shoulder, "practising wireless on the Arcadia. You knew that, Bobby, did n't you?"

Eve touched my arm, and we began to withdraw soundlessly.

"And, oh, Bobby," Elizabeth went on, "I'm afraid that you — that you may not come back. Those destroyers are — but I'm proud of you, so proud!"

"I'm coming back," said Bobby. "Trust me, if I have you to come back to. I always did have luck, and I've always come back. I do have you, don't I?"

"You seem to," Elizabeth whispered merrily. "And I —"

Then Eve and I were out of that balcony at last, and we went along the piazza as silently as might be, and down the steps. I began to sing softly, "The cloudless sky is now serene," and Eve laughed and checked me.

"Are n't you ashamed of yourself, Adam?"

"No, Eve," I said, "but I rejoice mightily."

"And so do I," she said, "and there is but one thing more needed to make me very happy. And that you shall tell me."

And we wended over the grass that was flecked with moonlight — it was wet too, that grass — and through the greenery that was no more green, but was of a dense blackness, and came out upon the bank above my clam beds, where the sod breaks off to the sand. And there Eve sat her down where the pebbles once shone in the sun, ADAM and EVE.

"I know it is wet," she said, "and

I do not care. Now do you finish what you began to tell me — about yourself."

I sat beside her. "It seems trivial now. Indeed, it is no great matter, but I am easier in my mind now that I have done it. I have enrolled in the navy. And that is all, and soon told. And if you do not like it, Eve, I am sorry, but I had to do it."

She laughed, and she gave a glad little cry, and her arms were about my neck.

"That is what I wanted to hear, Adam."

"But I thought that you had pacifist leanings, Eve."

"Every woman has such leanings, especially where the matter concerns those she loves. But I know that you will be happier, and not ashamed, and that is much to me; and I can be proud. I am very happy, but I am afraid too — terribly afraid. I pray that you may not be led into any danger — and if that is wicked I cannot help it."

I kissed the dear lovely face upturned to mine.

"And what did they say?" she whispered. "What will they do with you? You are in the Reserve, are n't you?"

I laughed. "I enrolled in the navy for any duty that they saw fit to assign me to. And the officer smiled, and said that I would be called when I was wanted. I may be a coal-passer, Eve, or I may be a mechanic to clean Tom's car, or I may breathe the pure air of heaven as I sail the raging main."

Eve wrinkled her brow. "But I don't like that, Adam. Don't you know whether you will be afloat or ashore?"

"I was told that I would be of more value ashore. And that I was sorry to hear, for I had rather be afloat, except that we should be parted. And I want to see a German submarine before I die. 'They ain't no sich an animal.'"

And Eve laughed, and we got up and wandered home over the pebbles of the shore. Fog was driving across the face of the moon, so that it was now hidden, now partially revealed. From above the fog we heard the mutter of thunder. Eve squeezed my arm.

"Do you hear the guns, Adam?" she asked. "The gods are warring."

"Never give it a thought, Eve," I said. "What are their wars to us?"

"Well," said Eve, sighing, "but I hope it will be ashore."

And we climbed the steep path, and went in to our candles, to wait for Elizabeth. Elizabeth was like to be long in coming.

THE END

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