

tounding yet awful declaration: "Brothers, I SMELL A STRANGER!"

But the others, who are not gifted with his damnable power, seem hardly to credit him.

One of them cries: "No man who loves his life would dare——"

Another, a little half Spanish creature, jeers: "Nonsense! Ata Tonga, you believe too much in your nose."

"*Santo Dios!* Did you ever know it to fail me!" And going to him, Ata takes a sniff of him; takes a sniff of the other, and then of the third. A moment after he says impressibly: "There is a fourth; I smell a fourth!"

"What smell?" And his companions spring up, now apparently convinced.

"The odor of some beef-eating race; English perchance. Certainly not Chinese or Oriental."

"Where is he?"

I know I am gone!

For the brute commences to follow the scent like a hound about the room, muttering: "It is stronger! It is stronger! It is stronger!" With a sudden movement he throws up the lid of the tea chest and I see over me a long Malay kris, gleaming in the soft lamp-light of the room.

"He is here; the spy of the Captain-General; and here he stays!" snarls my executioner.

But by sudden inspiration, even as the knife is descending upon me, I scream: "Ata Tonga! For the love of Señorita Gordon——"

"Ata Tonga! You know me?" and he staggers back surprised.

"Yes, I saw you to-day as I placed your mistress on the *Esmeralda*."

"*Santos!* It is the voice of the Englishman who assisted my beloved lady from one steamer to the other!"

In a second I am pulled out of the tea chest by an athletic grip, and stand staring like a Chinese fool into the faces of four human beings who look upon me with a distrust and hate I hope never to see again on the faces of men who have knives in their hands. One of them growls: "The silent tongue is always the safest. Englishman disguised as Chinaman, your life has ended!"

But I, inspired, whisper: "Down with your hand, Ata Tonga! How will you dare face your mistress if you slay one who would save her from her enemies!"

Looking at me, the educated savage takes a mighty sniff and astonishes me by muttering: "You SMELL TRUE! Brothers, there is still the odor of wild roses on his lips. My lady must have kissed him. This man must be our friend!"

And I, relieved from the fear of sudden death and blessing God that I have sullied my lips with neither food nor drink nor cigar since Maud's sweet lips gave sister's greeting unto mine, stammer out: "By the shades of Vidocq, what a detective you would make!"

CHAPTER V.

ATA TONGA.

AT my words, this astounding being bursts into a low hoarse chuckle of barbaric laughter; but a moment later takes two or three sniffs, and apparently following some odor to the door, remarks: "A Chinaman was here a little time ago. He probably secreted you." Then he adds impressively: "Señor Curzon—you see I know your name—to save your life you must tell us how you came here, why you are here, and then become one of us, cementing your oath even with the compact of mingled blood."*

"Join your gang—that has assassination under way—if I understood the words that came to me a few moments ago!" I reply indignantly. "You don't know me. I'm an Englishman, and do my killing above board."

"It is because we have assassination under consideration and because you have discovered it, that you must join us; otherwise——!" He waves his hand with a significant barbaric gesture.

"Hang it, you're not going to let those devils murder me?" I mutter, as I see the other three begin to

* For particulars regarding this peculiar admission to the Society of United Filipinos, see Appendix.—ED.

eye me as hawks do their prey, and their hands again raise the cruel gleaming Malay kris.

"Each one of these has been poisoned to make sure work in the enterprise before us," remarks the educated savage, "so you can judge, Señor, that a very slight wound will be sufficient, though as a matter of mercy, I shall direct them to strike you in the heart."

Seeing the nasty, wavy, spiral blades upraised, and knowing from these conspirators' faces that if I would live I must speak like lightning, I hastily cry: "I'll join you! Give me the required oath!"

Then cursing myself for being a fool and getting myself into such a scrape, I go through with these conspirators a ceremony, impressive, barbarous. With their mystic knife they make the indelible mark of the Katipunan upon my left forearm and the Blood-Brotherhood begins. With our mingled life blood from our punctured arms and legs, I sign an oath making me a member of the *Katipunan*, that great society which racked for eighteen months the Filipinos with war, bloodshed and torture; the war of the enslaved against a barbarous government; the torture of hapless women and children by Spanish despots; the torments in revenge of Spanish priests and soldiers; the bloodshed alike of both the innocent and guilty.

"This document and the sign upon your forearm will insure, Señor Curzon, your fidelity to us," remarks Ata Tonga, his manner becoming more affable. "Let me present to you as brothers, Gorgio Posas, Antonio Ramona and Lee Hang Pauh, if ever you receive this grip and this salutation, you may know a brother greets you!" And he instructs me in the peculiar signs, signals and tokens of the United League of the Filipinos. "But I warn you," he goes on impressively, "if it becomes known to the Governor-General at Manila that you are a brother of *El Katipunan* your life will be worth in Spanish hands about as much as mine, which would be very little. Will you amuse yourself with a cigar while I confer with our brothers." He offers me a very good weed, remarking: "You are perfectly worthy of our confidence now, though I don't suppose you would like to join in our discussion, as we four gentlemen are appointed to assassinate Captain-General Blanco. You need not start and look surprised. I am

perfectly confident you appreciate the oath you have taken. Besides it would mean your almost immediate assassination, should you ever divulge any secret vital to our order."

Whereupon leaving me, puffing his cigar, in a state of amazed coma, he goes into some private conversation with my brethren, who shortly after wish me "*Adios*" very kindly and depart.

Then drawing a chair up to me, and lighting a cigar, Ata Tonga says to me, a decisive ring in his tones: "Now in regard to my lady, Señorita Maud?" There is a kind of loving reverence in his voice. "From your hasty words, I judge you came here, Señor Curzon, with some ultimate view of discovering something that would aid her. You can have perfect confidence in me, not only as one who adores the breeze that blows her perfume to me, but as the Head of your section of our brotherhood. Of course," he looks round the room, "this is not the meeting-place of the main *Junta* at Hong Kong, only the rendezvous of a certain portion of us who have a fixed work to do, and as such foolishly thought, in an out-of-the-way quarter, with no special guard upon it, the place would not be conspicuous." To this he adds smilingly: "You brought a Chinaman with you who showed you this place of meeting. Under other circumstances, I would have compelled you on your oath of brotherhood to tell me who he is, but having taken sniff of the fellow and having registered his odor, I can recognize him on the most crowded street in Hong Kong."

"Impossible!" I ejaculate.

"Perfectly simple! For he is an anomaly among his race. This Chinaman has become a beef-eater like you English."

Remembering Khy's statement as to his Delmonico cook, I answer this with an unconcealed grin and a muttered: "My God, what a boon you would be to Scotland Yard!"

"Yes, I have been told that before; this instinct, that has come to me from my savage tribe has been but slightly diminished by the enervation of what you call civilization," he replies. Then he laughs: "I see by your face and learn by your words that my nose has made no mistake in my Chinaman!—Now!" and his

manner becomes very serious, "as you are an Englishman and have their peculiar ideas of never peaching on a confederate, I shall only ask from you this question: Will you state to me on your honor as a member of the United Filipino Society, whose brand is upon your arm, whose oath you have taken in your blood, in my blood, in the blood of three others of our brothers, that this Chinaman knows nothing more than that this room is our meeting-place?—I ask that for his safety as well as yours!"

For one moment I think the matter over, then promptly answer: "He knows nothing more. In fact he is afraid to learn anything more."

"Very well, that saves his life," says Ata Tonga, as he smokes his cigar contemplatively. "Now what do you wish to learn with regard to Señor Gordon and his family?"

To this I reply, very much impressed by this civilized savage's manner: "I wish to know what hidden danger hangs over my affianced, Señorita Mazie Inez Gordon."

Ata's answer is reassuring. "None!" he says, "except what will come to her through the misfortunes of her family."

"You mean old Gordon and the young lady who left here to-day?"

"Yes; the dangers before them arise mostly from our projected insurrection."

"Ah! old Gordon is a member of this Society?"

"No; he is too cautious. But his daughter is."

"Great Heaven!" I cry, "that beautiful girl!"

"Yes! You know what Spanish mercy is."

"How under Hades did she become a member?"

"Through the agency of a man she thought her father's friend, her friend; Herr Adolph Ludenbaum, who hopes through her fears to obtain some hold upon her—for what accursed purpose I do not know."

"How, under Heaven, was she persuaded?"

"My dear lady was only a child at the time," mutters the devoted Tagal. "She loved liberty, *Cambunian* bless her for it.* At that time, six years ago, there was little thought of insurrection in the Filipinos.

* Cambunian is the god of certain tribes of Mountain Tagals who have been unconverted.—ED.

The Society* was then more for peaceable resistance to the Spanish tax gatherer than for open rebellion. Now it has become a great, far-reaching power that will make war upon Spain and drive her from our islands. With Señorita Ysabel's impulsive nature, and her brave heart, my lady, child of nature that she was, some time before she went to the United States, when scarcely over fourteen years of age, became a member of our order. To this she was artfully incited by the German whose stink is like the anaconda."

"She has the indelible brand upon her arm?"

"No," smiles Ata Tonga—though she was a child in years, my dear mistress was vain of her beauty—it was placed upon her leg."

"But you who love her, why did not you prevent this child placing herself in a position that may make her the victim of a vindictive government who believes in exterminating all rebels?" I ask, indignation in my voice.

But Ata Tonga's eyes flash with greater rage than mine. "Because," he snarls, "I never knew! I was not even a member of the society in those days. It was only after Señorita Ysabel had taken the breath of the wild roses with her across the sea that I became sick at heart on the great plantation under the mountains of Caraballo de Baler, where I had been tutored by monks to read and write.

"Journeying from there I came across the sea to Hong Kong, hoping to follow the being who has my life blood at her service.

"In Hong Kong for my livelihood I was compelled to become a riksha boy. Sweating under the burdens of a coolie, I caught the fever, and when recovered was too weak to do the work of a pony. But by the pleasant act of a kind Englishman I was given light employment in the custom-house handling packages of tea. One day I chanced to scent in a case through the pervading perfume of the tea leaf that of the poppy which you call opium. I told my master, and he made a great seizure of the smuggled drug.

"Receiving a large amount for his astuteness, the British official, more just than most men, gave me a goodly

* For details of this extraordinary society, see Appendix.—ED.

portion of it; and suggested to me that I could perhaps make a fortune by detecting opium in the various packages the Chinese, with their cunning smuggling arts, concealed so deftly. But it seemed to me a poor business, devoting a great faculty merely to make a government rich. In my simple way, I could live for a long time upon the money in my hand. I did so, and by study increased the knowledge given me by the priests. Nature had made me a savage, but I made myself an *educated* one. I said: "I'll raise myself to where my mistress can look upon me and say: 'This gentleman' not 'this coolie' 'is my servitor!' With knowledge came the love of liberty and the desire to obtain it, not for myself alone, but for the millions of my fellow Filipinos, whose pay to the tax gatherer is half the sweat of their brow each year; who when they are short in their *corvée*, as punishment for not having money enough for their tyrants, are drafted into the Spanish armies and sent to Mindanao to fight the intrepid Moros, and die like dogs in the swamps and jungles of that sultry island.

"Soon I found others who thought like me, and became known to the Society of the United Filipinos, of which you are now an affiliated brother. Englishman, you need not be ashamed of your comrades. There are some great men among them. Luna, the artist, the two Roxas, the richest Mestizos in the Filipinos; Dr. José Rizal, the savant of the Institute at Manila, who invented the mystic rights of the Katipunan and its Blood-Brotherhood, who drafted the constitution of our Filipino League, Emilio Aguinaldo, Sandigo and Atachio. You see I am candid to you as I should be to a brother of our order. On my initiation into the Katipunan, I for a time became its secretary. Imagine my astonishment when in its records I found the name of my dear mistress, who cannot aid us—at least, I think not—but who can become its victim and its martyr. Help me to save her!"

"I will!" I answer. "Because in aiding her I save her sister from a great sorrow; perchance from destruction with her."

"*Diablo!* your hand on that. You smell true!" he cries impulsively. And as our fingers clasp something tells me Ata's heart is true also.

"That is a great sense I have," laughs the Tagal, of telling other men's minds with a breath of my nostrils. Still had your lips been sullied to-day, Señor Curzon, with the odor of cigar, the stink of ardent spirits or the flavor of the strong curry you Englishmen enjoy in this hot land, I might have missed the perfume of roses from you and not known my mistress had guaranteed you by the touch of her rosebud lips. But the atmosphere of this secluded room is stifling with every window closed and barred," he says rising. "Come with me to my quarters. I live like a European. Not being a Chinaman I can even sleep at the great Hong Kong Hotel. At my room I'll give you full details."

So we go out together, and I walk along the streets by the side of this being who, dressed almost as a gentleman of fashion, has the marvelous sense of his own savage tribe. "To you this must be a strange world," I whisper, "a world not only of sight but of scent."

"*Diablo,*" he laughs, "it would be a curious world to me, if I were to lose my nose. I should feel as helpless as you would if you lost your eyes."

We have just reached the intersection of Wyndham Street and Queen's Road. Gazing over the granite clock tower, I see the open windows of the English Club. "What does your nose tell you they are doing in there?" I ask.

"Drinking," he laughs.

"Pshaw, I could have guessed that myself," I say.

"Yes, but can you guess what is in that closed palanquin coming down the hill?"

"How can I tell in semi-darkness and the curtains very carefully drawn."

"Well, then, there is a Chinese woman of the town behind those closed draperies."

"The devil you say!"

"That was not difficult. The odor of the red pigment with which these poor creatures always paint their cheeks, disclosed her to me. Stay, there is a faint breeze blowing up Wyndham Street from the water. You can't see down it, can you?" he questions.

"Of course not, the corner of the Hong Kong Hotel prevents me."

"Well, I'll tell you what's coming up it. Watch the people as they pass, and say if I am right."

"Very well," I answer eagerly.

"First," and my savage takes a sniff or two of the air, "there is a German; I think a mate or captain of some foreign vessel; for to me not only comes the odor of sourkraut but it is mingled with imported schnapps."

"Pooh, I can smell the sourkraut myself," I laugh.

"Ah, yes, but after the German sea-captain is walking a Chinaman carrying a large parrot and a small monkey. Tell me if I am right."

"By heavens, yes!" I murmur.

"Behind him is a Malay, probably from the more southern islands, as he smells of sandal wood."

"Yes," I say, peeking around.

"And here," Ata Tonga suddenly sniffs the air viciously, and whispers in my ear; "comes the Chinaman who lives on meat; the man who guided you to our rooms."

Looking down the street I start astounded at the wondrous instinct of this educated savage. For nearly twenty yards away I see Mr. Ah Khy, re-arrayed now in his dress suit, with monocle jabbed in his Mongolian eye, sauntering up the street, and twirling his cane with the airs of a Broadway or Piccadilly lounge.

The passing Chinese dandy gives me a startled gasp as he sees me in company with this wondrous creature and—*alive*.

A moment later I give a gasp also. The Tagal's eyes have a strange apprehension in them. He says to me after Ah Khy has moved on: "That Chinaman is the son of old Hen Chick of Manila. Was your meeting him brought about in any way by Señorita Gordon. It is important that I know for the safety of my lady."

Seeing that Ata Tonga means what he says, I whisper to him: "Come to my rooms where I can get off these miserable Chinese garments, and I'll tell you everything about the affair."

"I am at your service."

Together we walk to my apartments, some little distance below the Botanical Gardens, from which

drifts to us the faint music of the band of one of the garrison regiments, that is playing its last airs for the evening.

Here, praise the Lord, there is a little breeze. I throw off my Chinese garments; take a hurried tub; get into civilized togs once more, and sitting down by Ata Tonga relate to him the whole history of the day, and show him the curious warning; adding to this what Khy has told me about his father's connection with it.

As he listens, the eyes of the Tagal grow strangely luminous. He whispers to me: "We have but little time to lose. My mistress, Señorita Ysabel, is in the midst of some plot; some intrigue of Ludenbaum's, the German anaconda; some plot to entangle her and her family. I can't tell you what; but be sure it has the subtlety of a Judge of the accursed Supreme Court of Manila, the most infamous tribunal upon this earth.*"

"What makes you think that?"

"The warning given by Hen Chick is to prevent my lady's going to where the Spanish have authority. He hates Ludenbaum with all his Chinese soul. I have caught that musty odor that Chinamen give out when enraged, whenever the anaconda-smelling German has been in Hen Chick's presence. He perhaps guesses what her danger is, but is apparently afraid to disclose it. You must go to Manila at once."

"I——"

"Yes! Leave by the next steamer! I shall probably be there not much later, but can't go your easy way. My passport will not be viséed by the Spanish Consul," grins the conspirator.

"You are sure that haste is as important as that!"

"Possibly! still—" Ata Tonga thinks deeply for a moment; then mutters: "perhaps not, for our insurrection does not come before the fifteenth of September. That's the time appointed, when our crises will be sharpened. Inform me if any new information comes to you. I will communicate with you if I receive any news of my dear lady. But be assured," he says, as he salams before me, "that there is some hidden danger

* For details of this so-called tribunal of Justice see Appendix.—
Ed.

to my beloved mistress which perhaps involves her sister, the girl you love."

"With even a suspicion of that," I burst out, "how could you let Maud in her youth, beauty and courage leave this afternoon? You spoke to her."

Here the poor fellow commences to wring his hands and moans, his eyes growing haggard: "It was I who *ordered* her to go. I was instructed by the Katipunans to command our sister to be in Manila on a certain day. It was an awful blow to my lady. In the free land of America, so far away from the conspiracies of rebels against despots, the poor child had almost forgotten she was bound by the Katipunans oath; that her signature written in her own fair blood was upon the scroll of Spain's foes and Spain's victims."

"You commanded her to go?" I muttered astounded.

"Yes; by orders from our highest council. And let me tell you my new brother of the Filipino League, their commands must be obeyed. Señor Curzon, I warn you if you receive any orders from the secret *junta*, take heed that you fulfil them; otherwise your life is not worth as much as a game-cock's in a *gallina*." Then a new idea coming into the mind of this creature of subtle instinct, he smites his hands together and shudders: "Perhaps that infamous old German may have some secret connection, some underhand influence, with some one high up in the councils of our Society. That's my lady's great danger. By the Katipunans he may place Señora Ysabel in a position where she must affront the power of Spain; by his influence with Spanish officials, especially the *Corregidor* of Nueva Ecija, old Ludenbaum can make sure of my darling lady's being the victim of cruel military punishment, unless she does his bidding."

"But what does Ludenbaum want Maud to do?" I ask earnestly.

"That I can't tell. Sometimes my nose has suggested the fat old rascal loves her, but his stink is so strong of anaconda, my sense in such a delicate point is confused.

"If he does," goes on the Tagal, the wild light of a Malay in his burning eyes, "it is the love that destroys,

and by the Burning Island of the Lake of the Taal my kris will be in his heart. But," he breaks into a short laugh, "I am becoming as excited as if I were still a savage, Señor Curzon. Remember I am found at the Hong Kong Hotel. Communicate with me only if absolutely necessary. Together we will save my adored lady, whose breath is as wild roses. In that we are brothers!" And the Tagal rubs my nose with his in proof of fellowship, and leaving me, strides down the hill; while I, looking after him, notice his step is that low, gliding, springy motion peculiar to some tribes of savages and beasts of prey who hunt their game by night.

Then with a kind of a jeering laugh, I remark: "By Jove! what would Phil Marston of the Navy say to all this?" and turn into my burning bed to try and get a little sleep.

The next morning, however, a cablegram from Manila marked "delayed in transmission" comes to me at my office, where I am performing my mercantile labors in a very perfunctory kind of manner.

It reads:

"Use your own judgment.—GORDON."

Any telegram from him means to keep his daughter in Hong Kong. It has been delayed by the infernal Spanish censor, and I have permitted the brave girl to journey to Spanish danger.

In less than an hour after this I succeeded in inducing Martin, Thompson & Co. to think it is necessary for their interests and on strictly mercantile grounds, that I should be in Manila; certain cables from the Philippines telling of political unrest making my employers agree with me.

A little later in the day I obtain a few words with my Tagal fellow of the *Katipunans*, show him the cable, and explain its hidden significance.

"What danger do you think Gordon fears for his daughter?" I ask eagerly.

The answer of this subtle savage astounds me. "You have told me," he says, "that my honored lady has placed herself under the protection of that great republic whose power is far from here, but which, my reading tells me, Spain both fears and hates, because it is near to her in other portions of the world."

"Yes," I answer.

"Then if the Spanish officials know this, it is some plot to take away the shield she has seized for the protection of her father's and sister's possessions. You know the tobacco lands up at Nueva Ecija are very valuable. The political suspicions of the authorities make them nervously tyrannical, and it is so easy to accuse—so difficult to disprove—a person's being a member of a secret society, to which no one dares admit he belongs. Even to be an innocent Free Mason means absolute destruction at present in the Philippine Islands.* No accusation is too extraordinary to be made against a Filipino accused of being an *insurrecto*. If you would aid her, go at once!" commands the savage. "Ata Tonga will not be long after you."

Fortunately I find "going at once" is not difficult. I discover a freight boat that leaves this very afternoon for Manila. Upon her I take passage. To my delight I discover the English tramp steamer is a speedy one, and her charter commands despatch.

Therefore after running through the *Boca Chica* into the bay, and dropping anchor off *La Muy Noble Ciudad of Manila*, I find myself only forty-eight hours after the time the *Esmeralda* has delivered Señorita Maud Ysabel Gordon into the land where she may be made the victim of Spanish officials.

* The Spanish officials in the Philippines called the Society of United Filipinos, Free Masons, as this order has been condemned by the Catholic Church. The names Free Mason and secret conspirator against the Spanish Government in Luzon were considered synonymous.—*Appleton's Day Book*, 1896.

"It has been related by those who know, that the honor of wife or the virtue of daughter of the unlucky Filipino is held at the disposal of Fraile on demand. Resistance to such a demand means certain denouncement of the victim to the civil power as a 'Free Mason,' or a 'sympathizer of *insurrectos*.' The civil officials know much better than to question any charge of this kind emanating from such a source, and the unlucky man vanishes forever from his family. What goes on in Philippine prisons without trial in the way of torture, thirst, starvation, misery, mutilation and murder, has been of late a common enough theme."—*Singapore Free Press*, August 2, 1898.

BOOK II.

THE DAUGHTERS OF THE EXPATRIATED AMERICAN.

CHAPTER VI.

A FILIPINO TIFFIN.

It is beyond mid-day when we come to our moorings at the anchorage, off the breakwater at the mouth of the Pasig. It is the rainy season: but not raining. The soft southwest monsoon is blowing lazily, making scarce a ripple on the sunlit water of the great Manila Bay, whose boundary mountains, the Sierra Marvieles, are visible towards the west.

To the north are lands so low they are scarce visible, through which the Rio Grande de Pampanga flows by many mouths into the bay. But to the east, not much over a mile away, lies Manila, cut into two parts by the Pasig. To the south of the river is *La muy noble ciudad*, the Old Town, ecclesiastic, military, mediæval, and despotic, its ancient batteries fringed with frowning guns, many of them planted a couple of centuries ago to overawe Malay and Sulu pirates, who didn't hesitate in the brave days of old, to raid the shipping of the bay, despite the curses of the Captain-General, anathemas of the Archbishop and cannon of its capital.

Above the old Fort of Santiago floats the flag of Spain, indicative always of a colony struggling against the oppression of the Spanish official, in haste to loot a fortune, and the Spanish tax-gatherer, relentless in his greed.