

And I, seeing by the still burning lamp Ata's face, whisper merrily: "Thank God! This gives us a grand hold upon the German. I can crush him as I would a fly."

But he, gazing at me, mutters: "*Grand Dios!* I can't save my beloved mistress! This gives me no hold upon him."

"Why not?"

"Think of my country."

"Think of Maud Gordon!"

"Think of my brothers in arms! Englishman, remember them!" whispers the Tagal, his voice pathetic with patriotism, his eyes blazing with the joy of hope. "When we first began this war against the Spaniards, I wept for my brothers who fought with bolas and spears and even bows and arrows against repeating rifles! With iron water-pipes wound with wire we made puny guns to answer the steel rapid-fire cannon of our tyrants. Then to me suddenly and to all of us came *outside aid*. We didn't ask why. We had no money! The estates of the richest of us had been confiscated; still to us came arms, *good* arms, long range rifles, bullets that kill, cannon that made us equal, sometimes superior to our enemies. We didn't ask what good angel of an outside nation did this for us! All we knew was that God had placed in our hands arms with which to slay our butchers! Now I know why these four thousand guns are here. *These are to arm the Pasig River boatmen!* I came into the city to arrange their grand uprising together with the *Carabineros Rurales*, Tagals every man, all of whom carry Spanish guns. By *Cambunian*, I'll not strike down their effort to be free! Not even to destroy the German, not even for the sake of my darling mistress."

"Then I'll do it for you!" I answer, my voice hoarse with triumph.

"Not on your oath, not on your life, brother Katipunan!" commands the patriot savage sternly. "No word of this until these guns have opened on the Spaniards in the streets of Binondo, in the Plaza Major of the Old Town, until the flag of the Filipinos floats over the Citadel of Santiago!" His voice is hot with passion; his eyes are great with love of country. Then after a moment he goes on, forcing himself to

calmness: "Besides, I couldn't sacrifice the German without betraying one whom I have never met before, but whom I now know as Atachio, a brother patriot. No, no, the German's safe from me at present."

"Then what you are going to do with those receipts your agile hand and cunning glide stole when you blew out the lamp, Ata?" I ask eagerly.

The savage gazes at me astounded. "I have not taken those receipts," he falters. "I thought your hand seized them."

"By Heaven, no!"

"Then *Madre de Dios*, who has stolen them? *A-a-a-h!*" The savage is drawing the air into his mighty nostrils in great gulps. He has given a faint cry. "There has been another here!" he whispers, and dilates his nose again. "A Chinaman! *Carrajo*, it is the smell of the Americanized dandy who concealed you that night in Hong Kong, the beef eater!"

"Ah Khy!" I gasp, and sink astounded upon a bale of tobacco in which half a hundred rifles clink as I flounder over them.

CHAPTER XII.

HERR LUDENBAUM TAKES BREAKFAST ON THE ANCONA.

"*Maldito!* This Chinese spy must never escape to give his news of concealed arms, and deliver those documents to the Spanish. He has had no chance to leave the building. Englishman, remember your blood-brotherhood-oath of the Katipunan, and guard the door!" whispers the Tagal, and his voice has death in it.

"If Ah Khy once goes to blabbing to the Spaniards, there's no telling where he'll stop." As this passes through my mind I spring to the entrance and bar with my revolver all exit from the warehouse, then watch, mid the half discernible piles of leaf tobacco and great bales of hemp stacked tier upon tier about the gloomy shed, a ferret chasing a fleeing rat.

The sensitive nose of the Tagal takes up the scent of the lurking Chinaman, and follows it around long passages between the bales of produce into a remote

hiding-place, from which the pursued escapes, his little gasps of fear dying away in the darkness. Then I can hear the light tread of the savage sure in the darkness as a bloodhound and remorseless as fate, tracking the snake-like glides of the despairing Khy, till I, in very pity, call: "Surrender, you fool, and save your life!"

Perchance the great knife of the Tagal is getting too near him, perhaps the Chinaman feels safety can come only from me; for suddenly out he darts from the piles of merchandise, and throws himself at my feet, gasping in piteous voice: "Save me, Jack! Keep that bloody Tagal thug from laying me out!"

Over him is standing the Filipino, his eyes blazing with the love of country, upon whose altar he will make sacrifice; for he is snarling: "Spy of the Spaniard, thy time has come!"

But I, springing between them, seize his hand and say: "Not yet! Listen to me, Ata Tonga. Let us see if we can't permit this harmless fellow to live."

"An *espiá*, harmless?"

"He is no spy of the Spaniards. This is merely a matter of private revenge; about the same that brought us here to-night," I whisper.

"*Santo Domingo*, impossible!"

"True as that you scented him that night in Hong Kong." With this I give the Tagal in few words Ah Khy's connection with me, his father's hatred of the German and his motives for pursuing Ludenbaum here.

"True, it is hard to butcher a bellowing calf," mutters the Malay, for the plaintive Khy has punctuated my narrative with many moans and several writhings. "But now for this man to destroy the German would be to destroy the cause of my country. I dare not let him go!"

"You must!"

"Well, then, I will give him one chance for his life."

"That is?" I whisper.

"He shall become a Katipunan!" replies the conspirator grimly.

"No, no, by the Gods of my fathers!" screams the Chinaman, in hideous terror, "don't make me that!

The Spaniards slay all with that mark upon them. A court-martial convicts on that and shoots quick as greased lightning."

"Would you die here or live until the court-martial catches you?" whispers the Tagal menacingly.

"I'll—I'll take the chances of their catching me. Holy poker, keep your knife away!" whines the Chinaman, for the Filipino's blade is now at his jugular.

"Then the three receipts you stole!"

"Of course! But, oh jimminy! my governor will never forgive me for surrendering them. They would have smashed the German."

"*Diablo*, do you want to die or live?"

"Here are the receipts," shivers Khy.

"And now the oath. Señor Curzon, your veins I want as well as mine. The blood brotherhood demands it."

Compelled to stand as brother to this savage who gave me life under almost similar circumstances, I go through with him in the dim light of the lamp the hideous ceremony of making the shuddering Khy a Katipunan. With the mystic knife covered with symbols, Ata Tonga innoculates him with the blood of the Filipino Society upon his left elbow. Then gives him words of warning: "Now one of us, you can never be true to any other. If the Spaniards discover, you are dead. If you betray us, you are dead likewise. Forget your oath," he launches upon him the great Tinguanian curse, "may you die while you sleep!"*

"By Josh!" mutters Khy, whom this anathema doesn't seem to affect half as much as the knife, blinking his eyes at me, "Jack, you jumped into the same boat that night in Hong Kong, eh?"

"Yes, look out that you don't capsize it. The water here is full of sharks," I whisper warningly.

"I catch on, firing party, Luneta in early morning, exciting execution—oh my God!" shivers the Chinaman, and sinks upon his knees in kind of despairing fear.

* This is the great Tinguanian curse. It means: May you get no glory from your death. Sir John Bowring's notes of the Philippines, 1854.—Ed.

"Here is what will add to your terrors!" laughs the Tagal grimly. "Brother Khy, guard Ludenbaum's receipts for arms!" He forces the papers into the shuddering Chinaman's hand. "You'll never dare blab of these to the Spaniards while this war lasts. But if our revolution fail, destroy the German with the record of his treachery to Spain! Our sign upon your arm will keep your lips well closed till then. Now, Brothers, let us leave here; the light may attract attention. We must not risk the safety of these weapons which are for a sacred purpose."

As Ata Tonga extinguishes the lamp, I step out of the shed, Khy following close behind me and the Tagal making the last of our party.

Then we return separately through the streets of the Tondo into the busy parts of Manila, going each by himself, as an English merchant with a native would create comment, and were the two accompanied by a Chinese of the lowest order, even greater curiosity would come. For Khy has dogged the German's footsteps garbed as a carrying coolie of the poorest class, even bearing over his dirty shoulders a long bamboo pole to which are attached wicker baskets containing fruit and fish to give him the appearance of a Chinese peddler. These he has left just inside the compound by the side of the lane, and when he returns there replaces them upon his shoulders with a groan, for to carry aught but the heaviest load would bring suspicion on any Chinese coolie.

As we separate the Malay whispers to me: "Where can I meet you?"

I can't tell him at the English Club, so I whisper: "At my private office, Plaza de Cervantes. I'll await you there in half an hour."

"Thanks, Brother, be prompt, for I have much to do before the morning, and must speak to you words which bear on the safety this day of my beloved mistress."

His tones impress me.

So I tramp alone through the Tondo, and fortunately catching a carromata in one of the outlying streets of Binondo, my evening's adventures having fatigued me, I find myself standing under the sign of Martin, Thompson & Co. some few moments in advance of the Tagal,

who comes along with that gliding savage tread that no exertion seems to affect.

Two minutes after Ata Tonga bars and locks the doors of my front counting-room, then secures those of my private office, and after snuffing about suspiciously, remarks: "Señor, we are alone." Then with the blinds drawn down, though it is a burning night, for fear of words slipping through the open casements to the streets below, my fellow conspirator and I confront each other, and he astounds me with his revealing.

"My words, Brother, shall be open to you; my mind, also my heart," he says shortly. "When I came into this town under a special mission to arouse and perfect an organization of the Pasig boatmen, and likewise the *Carabineros Rurales*, who revolt to-day?"

"To-day?" I gasp.

"Yes; it is already midnight, and now the twenty-sixth of February! To-day they rise! Those arms you saw were for the Pasig boatmen, but the weapons were not my part of the affair. I've a meeting with Atachio in the morning, and then he will arrange that detail with me. Atachio handled the German whom I thought was a smuggler of merchandise, but who, God be praised, was a smuggler of arms for my brave fellows. Still this impresses me with the powerful influence the accursed Ludenbaum must have with my Society; for he has armed them! It is, I now guess, at his covert suggestion, that I was compelled to give Señorita Maud her orders to come at once to Manila on her arrival in Hong Kong. I have now other directions for her *which I shall not deliver*."

"You will break your oath of the Katipunan?"

"For her sake, yes!"

"You will forfeit your life if they discover."

"*Dios mio, cierto!* but it will be to save hers. For my country's sake this German I must spare for the moment, but my own life is still, as it will ever be, at the command of my lady whose breath is of the wild roses. Señor Englishman, will you be equally true to her?"

"Yes!" I whisper.

"Then my orders from the Katipunan were to charge Señorita Maud that she should in some way contrive

that Colonel Robles, a most energetic officer, the commander of the *Carabineros*, should be at her house at six o'clock this evening."

"How was she to do it?"

"Robles is among others a worshiper at the shrine of her great beauty. No man looks more longingly upon her loveliness as she drives on the *Luneta* than this same Robles."

"Yes, I have seen it!"

"*Caspita*; Señorita Maud is a bright enough candle to draw a swarm of butterflies. My poor lady is trying to get some influence among the Spaniards to save her father. It's a futile hope, but it's a woman's. This Robles, I believe, adores her. A little note asking him to call will be enough to take him from his barracks to her bright eyes. The town is quiet, only routine guard duty being done."

"Aha! So that he will not be present when his troops rise in mutiny?"

"*Diablo*, yes! His men love him so much they hate to shoot him down. This is the way we shall do it. At five in the afternoon the gathering of the *Carabineros* as they come in from outpost duty. They are all armed, with long shooting Spanish rifles. At six they are called together for parade. It's the usual order. On the words "*Compania alerta!*" each company kills its captain and lieutenants and such non-commissioned officers as are not with them in their uprising. With that they march to the river, where the Pasig boatmen, who have by this time received their arms, led by me, join them. Then fire and blood comes over this town. On the instant we rush the bridge to old Manila, and fight the Spanish garrison weakened by the immense drafts of troops sent to their generals in the field. By an unexpected blow we hope to take the Citadel of Santiago! Now if at the very moment his regiment revolts Señorita Maud lures a Spanish Colonel from his post of duty; should we fail, what a hold the knowledge of her action will give this German over her."

"But you will not deliver the Katipunan order?" I observe.

"Still some other may," whispers the Tagal. "To destroy this chance, do you, after making show of

business here this day, drive about five this afternoon to the villa of Don Silas, and watch over Señorita Maud. See that no communication comes to her. Prevent her from going out. If necessary, you can assert that my dear mistress, in this day of fighting and turmoil, knew naught of what led up to it." Then he asks me quickly: "You are sure you can trust the Chinaman?"

"As certain, now that he is branded with the Filipino mark, as I can you. Even more, for Khy would never take the chances you do," I remark; then ask eagerly, for this conspiracy is getting in my veins: "And how about Robles?"

"I will take care of the Spanish Colonel!"

"You are sure of that?"

"*Cierto!*" mutters the Tagal. "To-night you see me master of Manila, or you see me no more. Tell my lady, Ata Tonga kisses her hand." And the patriot savage leaves me, with information in my head for which I have no doubt the governor of this city would give almost his existence.

It is growing towards morning. I worry the night out on a cane settee in my private office, though little sleep comes to me. As soon as the town is stirring I step over to the French restaurant and find that a cup of coffee stimulates my system and braces my nerves. The mercantile houses are just getting opened and the clerks going to work.

About this time it occurs to me that I'll see how our German friend has endured the terrors of last night. A casual call at Ludenbaum's office in search of information as to the freight charges of a vessel the Prussian merchant is despatching to the Sulu Islands, reveals to me almost immediately that Ludenbaum has taken refuge on a German warship that is now lying off the breakwater.

"Our esteemed Herr Adolph," his blond book-keeper remarks to me, "was invited to breakfast on the *Ancona* by the ward-room officers."

"Ah, then I'll see him in the evening," I suggest, "when he comes on shore."

"That will be impossible! Herr Curzon, my principal told me he would probably spend a few days with his friends of the warship. They make a little cruise to Cebu and Samar."

"So, then he won't be back to bless us for a week," I remark jocularly.

"No; perhaps not for ten days."

"Well, I hope he'll have a pleasant trip," I say grimly, and stepping out cogitate: "Bolted! in terror of those stolen receipts. By George, Ludy knew if they once got into Spanish hands, a court-martial, despite the German Consul, might make mighty short work of him." Then I wonder if the Filipino patriot who signed them has been equally frightened and fled from the town. This may be the ruin of Ata Tonga's uprising of the *Carabineros* and Pasig boatmen.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MUTINY OF THE CARABINEROS.

BUT this reflection reminds me of my promise to my brother Katipunan. I go back to Martin, Thompson & Co.'s, and—shall I confess it—my hand trembles slightly as I sign the various documents submitted to me by my juniors.—I think of the awful things that may take place in this town to-day. Getting through with this as quickly as possible, I now want to give my confreres warning, so that they may be out of the way when bullets are flying. This must be done without disclosing that I anticipate an emeute.

"Have we the *Ajax* cleared?" I ask.

"Yes, sir, she sails for Singapore by noon," answers Budlong, my chief clerk.

"Well then I rather think we have finished business for the day, gentlemen. You can all get out and enjoy yourselves till to-morrow morning," I return.

As I step into a carromata that is waiting for me, I am pleased to see that my hint is being taken, and young Budlong and Charlie Stoors, my under clerks, as well as the Chinese porters and even that cursed prying Antonio, are all going on their various ways rejoicing.

Then driving out to my room at the English Club, I, worn out with the night's work, contrive to sleep—but leave orders I am to be called promptly at 4 P. M.

So at about five, I stroll over to the pretty Villa of Don Silas.

As I walk the streets two or three things come to my expectant eyes that are probably not observed by Spanish officials. The Pasig River is almost deserted, scarce a boat upon it above the bridges. Crowds of banca handlers and lighter men are traveling on foot or by tram-cars into the interior of Binondo. To my searching glance the faces of the rank and file of a detachment of the *Carabineros* which pass me marching from the fortifications towards their barracks have an eager though determined look upon them. Their officers, who in their careless Spanish way are walking with cigarettes in their mouths, and chatting gaily, their steps as light as the refreshing evening breeze.

As I reach the entrance of Bully Gordon's bungalow, I look at my watch. It is now half-past five. In half an hour, according to Ata Tonga's schedule, the tragedy at the barracks of the *Carabineros Rurales* will begin.

I turn into the grounds that are separated by a high iron fence from the wide avenue that is here made cool by the shade of fire-trees, and find—I am just in time!

Señorita Maud, looking in her white dress like a superb swan, comes gliding through the bananas and bamboos towards the iron gates that permit access to the street.

"Aha, Señor Jack!" she says, extending her hand to me. "You—you have come to—to dinner?"

Her manner, despite her cordiality, seems embarrassed.

"And you guessed my visit, so you haven't driven to the *Luneta*?" I query, attempting a little laugh.

"Yes, I was just stepping to our front gate to ask another *caballero* to partake of our hospitality."

"Whom?"

"Colonel Don Miguel Robles of the *Carabineros*. He is riding this way with his staff from outpost duty. I saw the dashing fellow from my window. But why do you look so curiously at me?" For at her words the laugh has left my face.

"Rather a—a defiance of Manila convenances," I mutter.

"Oh, Papa shall ask Don Miguel, not me. Besides we have other company present, Don Rafaél the Cor-