

cable code. Looking over his tablegrams he handed me a wire that's broken my heart."

"What is it?"

"This! An order from my commanding officer canceling my leave of absence, and directing me to wait in Hong Kong and join the *Petrel* when she gets here." With this the young man goes on, anguish in his determined voice: "But I must go to her! I must—" he throws up his hands, and pressing them to his forehead, moans—"give up my career! By Heaven, that's what it means! It's my ambition or my persecuted sweetheart's safety! It's my career as a sailor or Maud; and I wouldn't be worth my salt if I didn't choose Maud! Go I must! See me write my death warrant as an officer of Uncle Sam. See me sail no more under the flag of my dear country."

Jove! how Maud Gordon would love her sailor boy—as he makes sacrifice for her; the perspiration of agony on his brow and writes the fatal words that will take him forever from the service that he loves only second to the girl whose cries for succor come to him from far Luzon!

But even as he signs it, I hear excited exclamations in the next room, and Bob Robertson, one of the officers of the cable company, strolls in and says: "Hello, Curzon, glad to see you about once more, old man. You've heard the news, I suppose? It will interest your friend there." He glances towards the American uniform.

"What news?"

"This! It's just been cabled from Washington that in time of peace, at dead of night, the American battleship *Maine* was blown up in the harbor of Havana."

"Blown up!" cries Marston, his pen stopping in the middle of his name. "I had a friend on board. Does it mention George P. Blow?"

"Saved, I believe," whispers Robertson. "The details have not come to hand, but three hundred or more American seamen were blown to death in their hammocks."

"By what?"

"By an outside torpedo, supposed to be fired by Spanish treachery."

"By Spanish treachery!" cries the young American

officer, and tearing up his half-signed resignation, tosses it away. Then he whispers to me: "By Heaven, now I know what Wildman meant when he said 'on my own hook.' Now I know what this telegraphic order means. It means, by the God of battles, that the Asiatic squadron will go with me to Manila! By the Lord, my shipmates'll fire to avenge the *Maine*, but I'll fire to avenge, what'll make me shoot as straight as any man in the fleet!"

CHAPTER XX.

THE VENGEANCE OF A NATION.

So it comes to pass in the ensuing days that I and Phil Marston, like two fiends upon the shore, go to watching for the arrival of the American squadron and signs of coming fight; watching with an awful vengeful eagerness that makes us wonder why America lingers so long in seeking a Spanish expiation that to us seems righteous as the punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah.

During this time I write for further advices from Manila, but Budlong's letters always say: "no news from Nueva Ecija, no tidings of Ludenbaum or the daughters of the dead Gordon"—making a horrible uncertainty that seems to put a relentless cruel spirit into me and the young American officer.

Marston grows gaunt from very rage, writhing impotently as he mutters: "Good God, Maud will think me recreant! My loved one will cry out, I have deserted her in her extremity."

As for me, each coming day adds to my strength and savageness. I am in nearly my normal health, though mentally racked by a strange mixture of anxiety and ferocity when the Ensign, who has been watching on Signal Hill, runs down to our office and whispers "By Jove, the *Olympia's* dropping anchor!"

And I, looking out on Hong Kong Roads, see a great big white protected cruiser flying the flag of Commodore George Dewey, commanding the U. S. Asiatic squadron.

Marston going off to report to his flag-officer, comes back from this and says: "By Yankee Doodle, there's a great man on board that vessel!" He points towards the *Olympia*.

"Who?"

"The officer who commands our squadron! Dear old Admiral Taylor always told me that if George Dewey ever got the chance he'd make his mark on the sign-board of history; not with a paint-brush that any lubber can wash off, but with a cold-chisel, almighty deep and thundering big, and warranted to stand the wear and tear of foul weather and the racket of eternal ages!"

Apparently the American commodore is at work, sharpening his cold chisel. The U. S. cruisers, *Boston*, *Concord* and *Petrel*, all looking like white yachts, drop into the harbor. The *Raleigh* comes in from the Atlantic, *via* the Suez Canal.

Marston joins his vessel, a saucy-looking little gun-boat of something under nine hundred tons, with square rigged foremast and fore and aft sails on her main and mizzen, and "a pretty sharp set of teeth for such a little dog, Jack," as the Ensign says to me; for mutual interest and mutual misery have made us by this time comrades.

When he can get the chance the American comes on shore; but he is very busy now, and tells me that they're getting nearer day by day to the Spaniards.

"By the Lord," he whispers in my ear, "they have brought the crew of the obsolete *Monocacy* from Shanghai to fill up the complements of our vessels to fighting strength."

A few days afterwards, about the nineteenth of April, as I recollect, the young man confides to me gloatingly: "We're putting on our war paint," and I, looking out over the harbor, see the beautiful white yacht-like American squadron becoming grim and dark, and know the color means Spanish blood; so together we shake hands, for we are like two fiends now and not ashamed of it.

Two days afterwards the *Baltimore* comes in, sent from the Pacific coast. "Do you know what she's got on board?" chuckles Marston to me.

"Coal!" I say.

"Coal be damned! ammunition to kill the Spaniards!" Then he mutters despairingly: "If war should not come——"

"It must!" I cry. "Your prairies are on fire about the *Maine*. The report of the commission is she was destroyed by outside explosion."

"But if the Dons should turn tail and show the white feather at the last," snarls Marston, with a muttered oath.

"Don't be afraid of that," I answer. "They'll fight with as much courage and as little discretion as any nation upon earth."

About this time the revenue cutter *Hugh McCulloch* comes up from Singapore, and on her the American Consul Williams, who had left Manila at a hint that his life was in danger from Augustin the new Captain-General of the Philippines. But from him neither Marston nor I can get any word of the fate of Gordon's daughters. All Mr. Williams knows is that the young ladies have gone to their father's plantation at Nueva Ecija, one of them married to the German merchant Ludenbaum—a piece of information which makes Maud's lover look more wicked than a nautical Me-phisto.

This uncertainty makes me half mad also. I envy Marston his gloating preparations to kill Spaniards, till one day we chance to stand under the big granite shaft erected on the road to the Happy Valley "To the joint memory of the dead American and English sailors who fell fighting together in '55 against the pirate junks at Kuhlan!" A monument which no English regiment marches past without halting while its band plays "The Star Spangled Banner" and "God Save the Queen," and then a dirge for the brave tars of the two Anglo-Saxon nations who fell as comrades, which they always should be, fighting against barbarism.

Looking on this, I mutter: "My Heaven! if I could but go with you and fight my enemy and thine!"

"Come!" cries the young man. "By the memory of the dead whose names are on that stone! Volunteer! I can fix it for you. You know the Philippines—volunteer, and go on one of our two big store ships. Dewey has bought both of them with lots of coal. He's not going to take any chances of losing the sinews of war by

the neutrality of the English government after its declaration."

"No non-combatant store-ship for me!" I mutter savagely. "Get me a fighting berth and I'll go with you!"

"I'll try to!" cries the young man, and running off to Pedlars Wharf, goes on board the flagship. So I have an interview with Wildman and then am asked a few sharp questions by Commodore Dewey as to my knowledge of Manila and the Philippines. In which, discovering I am a full fledged Katipunan, he laughs grimly and sets me to work under Rounseville Wildman to make certain arrangements with Aguinaldo, which result in that patriot who has not received the balance of his Spanish dole, returning to Manila to again make war on Spain.

Therefore I soon find myself enrolled as a volunteer on the *Petrel* under the title of "Interpreter." The wardroom mess who, through my intimacy with Marston by this time know me pretty well, kindly give me a seat at their table, and I become rather famous; for I give rise to that wondrous story invented by a French naval officer and quoted by a member of the British House of Commons, that the American squadron hired all their gunners from the English fleet, inducing the tars to desert Her Majesty's service by a bounty of five hundred dollars per man.

So it comes to pass that I, on Sunday, the twenty-fourth of April, steam out on the *Petrel* in company with the *Boston*, *Concord* and the two transport steamers *Nasham* and *Zapiro* to our rendezvous in Mirs Bay.

On the night of the twenty-fifth we are joined by the big *Olympia*, the *Baltimore* and *Raleigh*, and a thrill runs through the squadron as word is passed about that war has been declared.

The next day the little *McCulloch*, the revenue cutter, comes dashing in bearing the cable from McKinley that gives a free hand to Dewey in the Philippines, and every one knows that we will be at the Dons' throats within the week.

At thought of Spanish set-to, none rejoice so much as Philip Preble Marston, though every man upon the fleet is fighting mad. Even when our prows are turned straight for Manila we seem to steam too slowly for his

vengeance, and on Saturday morning, as we sight the bold coast and rocky peaks of Luzon, and clear ship for action, tossing overboard mess chairs, tables, chests and wardroom bulkheads, everything that may produce combustion under shell-fire, though no one works harder or does his duty more energetically than the young Ensign, I know his heart has jumped to the interior of the island where his love, suffering or dead, but *still* his love, awaits him.

All Marston wants is full speed ahead. He growls to himself as the squadron slows down for the *Baltimore*, *Boston* and *Concord* to look into Subig Bay, in case the Spanish fleet is lurking there; and he growls still deeper as, in the early evening, we drop to a three-knot speed so that the tropic moon shall sink before we reach the Boca Grande and its rays may not discover us to the batteries on Corregidor Island.

At eleven o'clock that night, with every light extinguished or masked, save one at the stern of each ship to give her course to the vessel following, we run the Boca Grande, the southern channel, the big one, the one difficult to mine, into the Bay of Manila.

The next morning, as the sun rises, I, who have not closed my eyes this night, look upon the city in which I had loved and I had lost.

The same bright sun is above me, the same sizzling heat is melting me this immortal Sunday, the first of May, as when I first looked upon the ancient town erected by the valor of the Conquistadores for old Spain, whose power is to receive this day its death blow and die in fire and blood on the soft waters of this limpid bay.

Ah, never was there a more beautiful and stately arena for gladiatorial nations to meet and battle to the death. Around us, as we move past the city, still shrouded by the mists of earliest morning, is blue water, bounded by shores of green, save where white villas peep from the foliage of copse, garden, jungle and forest that reaches almost to the moss-grown ramparts of the medieval Fort of Santiago and the more modern batteries along the Luneta sea front; beyond the great mountains of Malfonso and San Mateo. A back-ground quiet in that death-like peace—the peace of the tropics.

But now the foreground becomes a horrid picture of a nation's vengeance!

We've seen our prey! the Spanish fleet drawn up in front of the little Bay of Cavité.

So leaving merchant vessels and the foreign cruisers that lie in front of the city proper, the swift moving line of Yankee ships turns sharply to the south and—the battle is on!

Headed by the *Olympia* our war vessels in single column decked with those great banners that the Yankee tars call "Old Glory," steam in front of the long line of Spanish cruisers, flanked by the frowning batteries of Cavité and Sanglei Point.

The shore guns open on us; then the fleet of Spain! And I standing under the breathless heat of overhead sun, at my station on the *Petrel's* deck ready to transmit the orders of Commander Wood, thank God I don't have to toil below in the more cruel blaze of furnace fires in the stoke-hole or the pent-up sweating darkness of the magazines where men work stark naked.

Still the wonder is upon me that we are not destroyed before we fire one vengeful shot, for just ahead of the *Olympia*, too soon by a minute, go up two great sunken mines, and all about us, fly whistling, howling, shrieking things that lash the water into foam and make the air a very hell of sound.

"The *Olympia's* opened, sir!" comes from the bridge above; then: "The flag ship's signaled; fire as convenient!"

I hear the hoarse commands "Port batteries ready! Pass the word to fire, as the guns bear!"

With this, our ship becomes a thunder-cloud that shoots half-a-hundred lightning bolts a minute; all done by white-skinned sweating automatic demons who seem to move precise as clockwork, and hull those Spanish ships as coolly and as cruelly as if they were but targets and not vessels filled with men made in God's image, who are being maimed, battered and blown up and drowned under a fire that makes each Spanish deck a shambles—each barbette a torture hole.

Still about us come the flying, whistling, shrieking things, and the third time we pass the enemy's line, the

surgeon puts his head on deck and cries: "Why the deuce don't you send down the wounded?"

"There ain't no wounded!" guffaws a 'prentice boy, carrying water to his division.

"Then by Heaven, where are the dead?"

"There ain't no dead!" cries the captain of a gun, smacking his breech block, "not on this side of the fight."

And so circling round, first port-battery, then star-board-battery, and each time getting nearer our foe that has now become our victim, but with Yankee common sense taking breakfast between heats, we riddle 'em! we burn 'em! we sink 'em! and they go down with their flags flying and their guns firing till their batteries are awash, these lion-hearted Don Furiosos, who can die like heros but can't fight like Yankee tars—till all is over and there's now no Spanish fleet.

Then we are at the shore batteries who shoot no straighter than the vessels. And in an hour or two of this, the signals of surrender fly above the forts of Cavité and Sanglei Point. All that fly the flag of Spain are a few small gunboats who have taken refuge in the inner bay behind the arsenal; with this the signal goes up for the *Petrel*, the baby of the fleet, the light draft gunboat, to go in alone and finish them.

And we *do* finish them! At five o'clock that evening we come steaming out, our little vessel towing five Spanish craft of varying sizes from a gunboat of a hundred tons to a steam lunch; the only floating things of all that Spanish fleet that met us in its Castilian pride this Sunday morning.

Our squadron is now off the Luneta and cheers us. We steam past them and signal that no man on board us has suffered by Spanish shot or shell. So it is with every vessel flying the American flag; no man has lost the number of his mess.

Coming from his division, Phil Marston, who has done his work this day in that kind of grim clock-like ferocity which animates these Yankees when they have the devil in their souls, stands beside me and whispers; "This was not a battle."

"Not a battle?" I gasp.

"No! it was an execution!"

Then his eyes chancing to catch sight of the flag

that is floating over one of the Kaiser's cruisers, the *Irene*, I think, the young American looks at me and mutters: Now for our German friend!"

Just here the Flag Ship signals us again.

Wood, our commander calls to the deck: "Who captured that last steam launch?"

"I did, Sir!" answers Marston.

"Then they want you on board the *Olympia*. You were with him, Mr. Curzon, when he made the seizure. You'd better go with him!"

A minute after I am seated beside Phil in the cutter, our only boat that will swim.

From this we climb to the deck of the *Olympia* on the forward part of which the band is playing soft, yet joyous music.

On our reporting to the captain, the flag lieutenant says the commodore wishes to see us.

Stepping aft I look curiously at a man whom this day has made immortal—the man who dared, careless of submarine mines and heavy guns with plunging fire, to run at dead of night the rocky and unlighted Boca Grande past Corregidor that he might in the morning be alongside his foe and in one short day seize victory for himself—an empire for his country.

At present Commodore Dewey with that careful attention to details nearly always allied to great executive ability, has just finished listening to a German gentleman who is now standing near him with that deprecating commercial attitude so common to Teuton business men who have been taught by a military bureaucracy to respect a uniform.

As Marston salutes, his flag officer says: "You captured that steam launch, the last of your tow?"

"Yes, Sir, the *three* last!" answers Phil modestly, then adds eagerly: "But I'm not tired. I—I volunteer to head the first boat party to make landing to-night in that city."

"Humph!" remarks the Commodore. "You're in a hurry to get on shore, young man!"

"Yes, Sir," replies Marston. Heavens, how eager his voice is! "I've got a sweetheart waiting for me in that town."

"So has every good-looking fellow in this fleet, I guess!" chuckles Dewey, and two or three officers

standing near stifle a laugh. "But that's not why I sent for you, Mr. Marston. This German gentleman has just come off in a shore boat to complain that the last launch you captured is the property of his firm and as such neutral."

"That launch was flying the Spanish flag and is even now loaded with cordage and naval stores. As such my orders were to capture or destroy it, Sir. I obeyed my orders!" answers Phil.

"Quite right!" assents the Commodore as the ensign salutes and steps back. Turning to the German, the American commander says: "You'll have to prove the launch and cargo are the property of your firm. When you do so, they will be returned to you!"

At this the ensign looks a little gloomy. What true blue-jacket likes to see prize money blowing away from him.

"Then as the representative of Herr Adolph Ludenbaum," replies the Teuton, "I shall apply for redress to the Consul of His Imperial Highness, the Emperor of Germany."

"Certainly! We only take Spanish property!" answers the Commodore, then says to the officer of deck: "Have this gentleman's boat called!"

As the German retires, the great sea-captain lets his eyes rest reflectively upon the foreign squadrons that are anchored to the north of the town, and probably goes to thinking of that problem, more difficult than sinking Spanish fleets which may soon confront him, the interference of the so-called neutral German fleet, almost unto acts of war. Perchance he mentally forecasts the future; for as he looks over his squadron in which there is not one armor-clad, I think I hear him mutter: "They promised to send me the *Oregon*."

But other thoughts are in my brain; likewise in Phil Marston's. At the word Ludenbaum, into the ensign's eyes comes a steely blaze.

Even as I recognize in the dim light of the setting sun the precise cashier of the office on the Plaza de Cervantes, Phil whispers to me: "Good Lord, that band's playing her favorite waltz—ask him about—about her?"

As the German reaches the gangway I stand beside him, Marston looking over my shoulder.

"Has your esteemed Herr Adolph returned to Manila?" I asked anxiously.

"Ah, Herr Curzon, glad to see you back. It is now safe for you to come," replies the Teuton. "My esteemed Herr Adolph is still enjoying his early marriage in Nueva Ecija. He was slightly indisposed, at least so Frau Ludenbaum wrote me, she is now his amanuensis as well as wife."

"*Frau Ludenbaum!*" This in a low, hoarse gasp from the man behind me.

"Yah! The daughter of the late Captain Gordon. I—I believe I have her note with me. It is in regard to her house in San Miguel released to Herr Ludenbaum by the efforts of his friend Dan Rafaél Lozado. Ah, here it is!" And the cashier produces from the papers in his pocketbook a note that, as I catch the handwriting in the rays of the setting sun, makes my head reel.

"By God, it's hers!" This comes from tortured lips behind me, and a quick hand plucks the letter from the Teuton's grasp.

In a flash the cursed thing's torn open.

"Look, see!" whispers Marston to me; his voice coming in quick spasms, "O God of Heaven! She signs Maud *Ludenbaum!* The German's got my love!" and stricken as if by apoplexy, he staggers and falls crashing upon the deck.

At the sentry's call, some of the after-guard pick him up, the grit and sweat of battle still upon his pale face.

Over him the surgeon mutters: "The heat of this awful fighting day has overcome the poor fellow!" while I gaze speechless upon the only American in all that fleet who was badly wounded in that Battle of Manila Bay, which destroyed an empire; and he stricken down neither by common shot nor bursting shell, nor Mauser bullet, but by a pen in a woman's hand—the hand he loved.

BOOK IV.

DIVORCE BY COURT-MARTIAL.

CHAPTER XXI.

"GOL, DARN IT! I HEAR THE EAGLE SCREAM!"

MONTHS before Dewey's guns reverberated over the waters of Manila Bay proclaiming that the power of Spain was dead—the same evening that Jack Curzon, his heart filled with a coming bridegroom's impatience, is kept from his sweetheart by the breaking down of the engines of his steam launch at Cavité—pretty Miss Mazie Gordon, decked for Señora Valdez' reception, trips into the *caída* of her father's, Don Silas's, big bungalow. Frocked in virgin white, she looks demure as a saint, yet the love flashes in her eyes tell the saint is thinking of coming bridegroom. Piquantly pouting she says to her elder sister: "Señor Jack? The laggard is not here?" And her glance flies eagerly to the Japanese screen behind which the young Englishman has put so many kisses on her rosy lips.

"No," replies Señorita Maud, who, this evening has the graceful loveliness of a swan, though her wings are rainbow tinted, she being decked in some garment of light gauzes of varying colors which gives to her semi-brunette loveliness a sparkling radiance that makes her face a picture of nervous beauty, as over her dazzling features run flashes of varying emotions; though supreme above these is the joy that her sister will soon be wedded to the man of her heart.

For all this matter is now arranged, the Church content, the dispensation from the Archbishop received. Good Padre de Laviga is to perform the ceremony at nine o'clock on the morning of the second morrow. Drunken papa's assent has likewise been obtained.