

"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.

Bully Gordon having grown sober during the morning has been appealed to ; and the old sea-dog being penitent of his outbreak of the night before, has given his consent in writing that his daughter Mazie Inez shall wed John Talboys Curzon, so that he may not forget his words in that stupidity which so often comes with prolonged worship at the shrine of Bacchus.

"Jack had business in Cavité, Mazie," answers her sister. "Probably he is detained. Anyway you know he will be here to-morrow night, the night before your wedding." Then her tone becomes motherly as she goes on : "As I advised him to be a good husband to you, I advise you to be a good wife to him. Don't let any piquant petulance or absurd jealousy make you uncomfortable to your husband. You know he loves you."

"*Dios mio*, yes!" cries Mazie, "with his whole noble heart."

"So much that he has waited here even in danger for you for nearly a year. So Inezita let us make our courtesies to Señora Valdez, and trick Manila society into thinking we have no care on earth. It is our truest safety that none guess, especially El Corregidor, that you wed within forty-eight hours the man of your heart."

"*Santa Maria!* You think Don Rafaél would be jealous if he knew?" laughs the lighthearted child, from whose dainty head most of the anxieties of this year have been kept by her elder sister's self sacrificing care.

"I know he would be," whispers Maud. "This I tell you not for your vanity, but for your protection. Don Rafaél in his old veins has a nasty medieval passion for my darling Mazie."

"Why is a medieval passion nasty?" pouts *Señorita* Seventeen.

"Because it is of the kind that failing to win you will see you no one else's. Beware of El Corregidor, Mazie."

"Oh, I'm not frightened of him," laughs the girl. "When I pout at him he looks unhappy as a Don Quixote. By the bye, apropos of suitors, how about Herr Ludenbaum, who plays the rôle of papa to you, though, *Dios mio!* it always seems to me he would like to kiss your lips and not your hand, who—" Here

her sister's face frightens her, so the minx pauses with a gasp.

"Would he dare!" whispers Maud in a choking voice ; then bursts out : "Nonsense, Herr Ludenbaum knows my heart, my soul is all another's! And so do you, Mazie," she goes on savagely. "Don't torture me with suggestions that drive me crazy when I think of my sailor boy who is so far away." Maud's tones have an agony in them that shocks her sister. "Be content, dear one, I can give happiness to you. Look at your bridal dress, and say : 'Maud did this for me!'" And getting her little sister in her arms, *Señorita* Gordon cries over the bright face a little but kisses it a great deal.

A moment after *Señora* Valrigo making her appearance robed in black with bright Spanish effects of yellow and red, and the duenna reluctantly tossing away her cigarette, the three trip down to their equipage with its prancing ponies that awaits them in the courtyard, and drive off apparently in good spirits to a gathering of young Filipino dandies and young Filipina belles at the house of the rich Mestiza who entertains with that luxuriant prodigality that the Tropics bring to everything, even hospitality.

Upon them, as they drive away along the Calzada San Miguel, shines the great, bright, torrid moon, casting graceful shadows from fairy-like Filipino plants and flowers. In its light Maud's face looks anxious. The jovial exclamations coming from her father's sanctum mingled with the hoarser tones of Herr Adolph Ludenbaum bring to her mind fears, perchance all the more potent because of their uncertainty, that ripple over her beautiful features. Sinking back into the cushions of her carriage she gazes silently on pretty Miss Mazie and forces from her reliant mind an uncertain terror by the contemplation of a certain love. Her thoughts fly over the China Sea to the *Petrel's* quarter-deck.

A few minutes after, no one would guess the fears in Miss Maud's heart did they look into her bright eyes as she trips in the dance to the brilliant music of a Filipino band in *Señora* Valdez' big reception-room, or laughs with *caballeros* at the last *bon mot* brought from the gossip of the Luneta ; or even, turning her head

gazes, over her glistening shoulder at Don Rafael de Lozado as he bows before her pretty sister and looks rather scowlingly upon the young Filipino gentlemen and one or two dashing Spanish officers as they essay with Miss Mazie a waltz à la Madrid.

Finally El Corregidor makes his bow and departs and Señorita Maud gives a sigh of relief, for her sister to whom she thinks the old gallant's passion is contamination. As for herself she feels with woman's instinct, above her, the shadowy hand always—and wonders will it fall, to-day, to-morrow—WHEN?

IT FALLS THIS NIGHT!

While his daughters are dancing their little feet off at the Filipino ball, the evening drawing on, Herr Adolph Ludenbaum and *Capitan* Silas Salem Gordon in his sanctum become more convivial, and El Corregidor, who says he has just come from Madame Valdez' reception, dropping in upon them, the bottle passes—many times. Though were his eyes not sodden with drink the ex-sea-dog would notice that his guests make more the pretense of imbibing with him than the reality. Four times does he quaff the strongest whisky, while El Corregidor only sips his and Herr Ludenbaum compromises on beer, which never intoxicates a German.

But as the night advances, from mirth and joviality Bully Gordon passes to that snarling irritable mood which comes from nerves destroyed; and this mixed with a savage ferocity, the relics of his quarter-deck bullying of jack-tars and 'prentice-boys, gives him the temper of a fiend incarnate.

Noting this, Don Rafael rising, bids his host good night.

Though cursed for "shirking his liquor," after one significant glance to Ludenbaum, and a cautiously whispered: "The fool is now savage enough to fight the whole Spanish army," El Corregidor passes out into the moonlit garden.

Curiously enough he doesn't leave the grounds, but secluded by a thicket of flowering azalias and seated beneath a cocoanut tree, lights his cigarette and smokes contemplatively though nervously. Two or three times he rises, steps to the entrance, glances out upon the quiet Calzada San Miguel, and mutters: "They're

late!" Then a spasm of anxiety flies over his face; he gasps: "O *Santo Dios!* If they come to arrest *mi amigo* Gordon after he has drunk himself insensible? That would be a misfortune."

But Don Rafael's eyes light up as sounds of drunken excitement come from the windows of Bully Gordon's villa, and he hears the sea-captain cursing his servants and making his Visaya boys run pretty lively, when he gives the word.

Just about this time as he is smoking his fifth cigarette, El Corregidor throws it down with a sigh of content, for the tramp of marching men is just outside the great iron gates, and a platoon of infantry of the line headed by a young lieutenant comes tramping up the pathway. He hears the officer whisper sharply: "Sergeant, caution the men to be quiet. Have they loaded? This traitor, we are told, may make resistance."

"I know how to meet that, Señor Lieutenant," answers the non-commissioned officer. "I have finished up too many resisting rebels not to know how to deal with this one."

"Yes," whispers the lieutenant, "it is said the rebellious brute harbored in his house the Tagal who incited the *Carabineros* to revolt. You remember Sergeant?"

"*Sangre de Cristo*, I do! My brother fell in the fight with the mutineers on the Malabon Road."

"Then quick, see the house is surrounded, but let the servants run away. This affair is to be a quiet one!" orders the officer.

A minute later, every Filipino boy and girl of Don Silas' big establishment bolts for safety as sentries are placed about the house and grounds. Then the lieutenant goes up the great stairs followed by the sergeant and a half dozen of his men, and kicking open the big entrance doors, tramps with clanking accoutrements into the house of the ex-sea-captain who is not accustomed to have his quarter-deck intruded upon, and who is in about as pleasant a mood as liquor ever brought a man.

"By Heaven, what do you want here, you damned Spaniard?" breaks out Gordon coming from his room.

At this there is a hideous chuckle from the German

sitting inside, who, however, takes the precaution of getting behind the iron safe in which Gordon keeps his papers, for Mauser rifles shoot very strong and the partitions of a Filipino house would be as paper before their bullets.

"What do I want here, you insulting brute?" cries the lieutenant drawing his sword. "I want you! You, Don Silas Gordon, are arrested by order of the Captain-General for assisting the rebellion; for harboring insurgents. Come with me!" and he seizes the sea-dog by the collar.

But the fist that had floored many a tough foremast hand and many a mutinous cock-of-the-forecastle answers this. With a shrieking "*Santa Maria!*" the lieutenant goes down under the table, floored by the Yankee's fist.

Then there are two or three hoarse execrations in Spanish, then two quick shots, and Bully Gordon crying: "Murdered, by God!" staggers back into his room, and falls stricken with death upon his own hearth-stone.

The German rises from behind the safe, a frightened look upon his Teutonic features, for his forethought has just saved his own life. A Mauser bullet has deflected from the steel safe behind which Ludenbaum had taken refuge.

As Herr Adolph steps towards the expatriated Yankee, from whose pale lips the blood is now flowing slowly, the lieutenant makes his appearance at the doorway.

To him the German springs and says: "There is no necessity of further action by you, Lieutenant. This man within five minutes will be no more."

"Yes, I was sorry to execute my orders this way, but when a Rebel resists, Sergeant Pises has but one way with him; and he—the prisoner struck me down in that brutal manner these *Americano* dogs have, using their fists like animals."

"He can't escape you. Give me five minutes with him before he dies," whispers the German. "You know I stand well with your Captain-General. Here is an order from the commander of this district!"

Glancing at the paper, the lieutenant remarks: "Yes, I was told you might be here, and to be ex-

tremely gracious to you, honored Señor Ludenbaum. Take what time you please with the dying man."

"Very well. This for your men!" and Adolph fills the lieutenant's hand with gold. "This, also, for yourself!"

He hands a purse heavy with *onzas* to the officer, who pockets it all; and stepping out whispers to his sergeant: "A doubloon for the men to drink, when this matter is over. Guard every entrance to the grounds. See that no one comes in from the avenue. Dig the grave for the carcass in the most convenient place. These sudden executions are better thought of by our commanding officer when the public know nothing of them. Those are our orders."

So the lieutenant, lighting his cigarette, sits on the front veranda, and the soldiers patrol the grounds, except a fatigue party who are doing some hasty work with pick and shovel on the gravel walk just in front of the big stairway that leads to the dying Don Silas' house.

The scene is as placid as before. No one, though a few people have passed along the street, has dared come in to discover what commotion has produced a volley and a death-cry. Perchance it is because they see bayonets gleaming in the garden and a uniform seated on the veranda.

As the lieutenant smokes, Herr Adolph Max Ludenbaum, stepping to the dying man, lifts up Captain Silas's head and mutters, a kind of gloating in his tones: "Does you know me?"

"Yes—of course I do—old pard." These are choking gasps, but the ebbing blood seems to have carried with it the liquor from his body, and Bully Gordon is no more the drunken man, but simply the dying one.

But just here Herr Ludenbaum looks astonished. For the old sea-captain, with that extraordinary vitality that, despite his years, seems to hold him to life, though he has been shot through and through, half staggers up and, seizing a leg of the table, pulls himself to a sitting posture. Then, that strange link between the spiritual and the mortal, which sometimes comes to the dying, giving his half glazed eyes the fires of another world, this man who, living, had discarded his country, seems to go back to it as he dies, and babbles

of a New England farmhouse and driving home the cows from pasture.

But the chill of coming death passing over him, he shudders: "It is snowing now, I'm—I'm cold—so cold." Then his brain grows clearer. He whispers, his eyes turning towards the German's pleadingly, his voice pathetic: "They've done for me, old comrade. Those Spanish dogs have finished me. I knew they would. But they won't do much more of this sudden murder business." The far-away look comes back into his eyes, and he laughs in a kind of weird triumph: "By Heaven, I hear the eagle scream!"

"The eagle *scream*?" stammers the German, for now there is a curious, scratching, rasping sound just outside the house.

"Yes, the bird of freedom! It's coming here, but not in time for me. Darn me, I cut myself loose from her, and made myself a garlicky Spaniard, so she couldn't save me. But she's coming! By the Star Spangled Banner, the Yankee bird's wings are flapping over these islands! Gol darn it, I hear the eagle scream!"

Into this Ludenbaum breaks, saying: "Does you know me, Gordon?"

"Yes," mutters the dying man, his eyes growing sentient again. "I want to talk to you before the blood chokes me up entire. You've known for years, by my last will and testament I've left you the guardian of my two children."

"God be praised, yes!" The German's eyes grow big with gloating joy.

"Maud is, I think, of age; but—but Mazie will still be under your care. You swear to me, a dying man, your old business friend, your old comrade in liquor and other good things that make men's hearts grow warm to each other, to fight for my two helpless darters' lives and fortunes; to be what you always said you would be to them, 'Papa Ludenbaum.' Give me yer fist on that, my honest German friend, and I'll—I'll die as happy as any man that's bound straight to hell."

And Captain Gordon holds out feebly a trembling hand towards his listener; but suddenly starts, and his eyes, that are growing glassy, seem now to have a glaring frightened look in them. For the German is

speaking to him as cruel words as ever were uttered to a dying father.

"I will be to your daughters what you has been to me!"

"What do you mean?"

"What does I mean, *du hund*? What does I mean? Mein Gott! I means you to remember! Remember eighteen hundred and fifty-four when you shanghied from a sailors' boarding-house on Long Wharf, San Francisco, a helpless German lad, and made him your leedle cabin-boy. Dost remember Max—Max what you rope's-ended day in and day out, night in and night out, until his back was burning wid coals of living fire."

"By the Lord," mutters the Captain, "the sneak-thief, cabin-boy, that the cat couldn't even make honest—the boy that stole from foremast hands and ship's cook. By Davy Jones, I remember Thieving Max!"

"You remember dot Bully Gordon, for I do! I have never forgotten. *Herr Gott, Himmel, Donnerwetter!* You didn't guess der prosperous merchant was der leedle cabin-boy, whose body was striped blue and red mid your colt; whose face was so frightened you didn't know it was dot of der man what hated you, what swore vengeance on you and yours! Does youse know me now?"

"God of Heaven, I do!" Then he screams, "No, no! Sneak-thief Max, the coward cabin-boy—the fate of my darters in your hands, God of Mercy, no!" and the face of the dying sea-ruffian has a strange wistful terror in it, that grows into an agony as the German goes jeering on.

"And you've made me der guardian of your children, eh?" chuckles Ludenbaum in horrid glee. "Oh, dis is my time, you dying devil! It is mein revenge. As you treated me, so do I treat your spawn, you Yankee brute! Der mercy you gave to me, I give to dem. Tink of dot, mid der fiends in der odder world, and be happy. Oh, it is my turn now. Two beautiful girls, one tender in years, der odder, grand in loveliness like a Lorelei, *mine—ALL MINE!* To crush der spirits; to hear dem beg for mercy; to laugh at der broken hearts and still enjoy their tender beauties!" Despite his hate the German's face blazes with unholy passion.

But here Ludenbaum pauses in his rhapsody of revenge, for the dying man's eyes conquer his, and the dying man's voice is speaking to him as it used to on the quarter deck. "You little devil that I used to whip out of his skin four times a watch, by Davy Jones, I remember ye now! Max, my sneaking, stealing, kick-about cabin-boy. You dare to stand up before my daughter Maud? By the Lord of Heaven, she's as gritty as me! She'll take the life out of your currish blood. She'll protect her sister and herself. *But she won't need to!* I've got one more minute to live and *kill you!* Cabin-boy Max, your skipper's coming for ye!"

"*Gott in Himmel!*"

For, rising like a captain on his quarter-deck, the blaze of a martinet skipper in his wild eyes, is Bully Gordon; and like the whipped cabin-boy of long days ago, flying from the brute who dominated his soul, is Adolph Max Ludenbaum.

With a wild shriek of terror, the German dashes through the door, and screams: "Lieutenant, save me!" cowers, and flies from his giant pursuer, who, staggering after him, raises his hand to strike him down with mighty fist.

But even as the blow descends, the wounded skipper, with a muffled groan, staggers in his step, falls, and dies in his tracks upon his own threshold.

A minute after Ludenbaum, with face still pale, and ship-boy's terror yet in his trembling limbs, falters out into the moonlight of the garden, and looking about, chuckles in a half-frightened way: "*Donner und blitzen!* Dot eagle scream was der shovels scraping der gravel as dev dug der grave of der bully and brute, whose offspring shall feel mein vengeance—even as I felt his!"

To him the Corregidor comes strolling in the moonlight, and murmurs: "*Adios, Don Silas!*" as the men are shoveling the earth and rearranging the gravel right in front of his own door over the corpse of the ex-American sea-dog.

"And now for der young ladies!" whispers Ludenbaum, his face aflame with a savage love.

"*Dios, we understand each other. Señorita Maud has been your wife for seven years, eh mi amigo?*"

I am to swear to that," chuckles El Corregidor. "And Señorita Mazie?" The Spaniard's senile face becomes half adolescent with expectant passion.

"*Verdammt!*" mutters the German. "As I agreed, I shall exercise my authority as the child's guardian so that she shall be delighted to wed my dear friend Don Rafaél Lozado to escape my rigorous rule, when I do so command," and the ex-cabin-boy begins to look like a skipper bullying on his quarter deck.

"Is Don Emilio Gonzalo de Monaldo in waiting?" asks the Corregidor.

"Yah, der under-secretary of der Supreme Court is even now in der dead man's office drinking his wine and sampling his cigars," chuckles Ludenbaum.

"Then, we will tell the lieutenant to make all arrangements so that your charges don't suspect," laughs Don Rafaél.

This is done quickly and skilfully.

And some half hour afterwards the two sitting waiting for their victims under the shades of the big coconut trees in the garden of the dead sea-captain's villa, hear the sound of fresh young voices, as a carriage drawn by prancing ponies turns in from the Calzada San Miguel.

Maud is laughingly crying: "Señora Valrigo, we were very good girls to-night, weren't we? No very naughty flirtations, eh?"

"*Dios,*" murmurs the duenna, as she lights another cigarette. "I do not know. After supper I went to sleep."

"Well," says Mazie, "you won't have much more trouble with *me*. To-morrow evening my lover will be by my side. The next morning I shall be Señora Curzon and will have all the liberties that marriage gives."

"But don't take them!" remarks Maud sternly. "You understand me, Mazie. I am talking to you in the name of our dear dead mother."

"Yes, God bless you," cries the younger sister, "for giving me the husband that I love!"

So the two, hand in hand, trip with light feet robed in hosiery *de soie* and slippers *de bal* over the gravel which covers their father's corpse, and run up the stairs to the great entrance of the house; while El Corregidor and

the German, in the concealment of the shrubbery, turn hungry eyes upon each other and laugh in a subdued and hideous merriment.

CHAPTER XXII.

INTO THE LAND SHE DREAMS.

BUT a moment after to these two chuckling conspirators, through the open windows of Gordon's villa, come cries of amazement and alarm.

"They have discovered," whispers El Corregidor. For the sweet voices of their two victims are ringing out over the shrubbery.

Maud is saying: "This is very curious, my maid isn't here."

"No servant in the house," cries Señora Valrigo; "and *Diablo!* some one has smoked all my cigarettes!"

Mazie is calling: "Zima! Zima! Where are you, you lazy little black thing?"

"I must allay their fears," whispers Ludenbaum. "My poor little doves must not be frightened just yet. Arrange with the coachman, he is in our pay!" and the German runs up the stairway.

In the hall he finds Señoritas Maud and Mazie looking for their maids, and Señora Valrigo searching for her cigarettes, which have been smoked for her by kindly Spanish soldiers; though every man of them has been moved from the house which looks almost as it was when the young ladies left it, the few stains upon the hardwood floor that tell the story of their father's death, are not prominent in the dim light, of half-turned down lamps.

As the German enters the flames of these grow brighter under Maud's deft fingers, and she looks in a rather amazed way at Herr Adolph, who says hurriedly: "Señorita Maud I bear a message to you from your father. This gentleman here,"—he brings quickly in from Gordon's sanctum the languid Don Emilio Gonzalo de Monaldo—"is the under-secretary of the Supreme Court of Manila. An order of

that tribunal compelled your father to depart for Nueva Ecija, the same command has been issued to you and your sister. You will find Don Silas awaiting you at the banca which will take you all across the bay to Pampangas from which point he will journey up the river with you. Your father left me here to instruct you to join him within the hour. Justice must be obeyed.

"Order of the Supreme Court of Manila!" cries Maud, angry, astounded and dismayed, though she has no guess of the horror that has taken place before her coming.

"Yes, Señorita Gordon!" remarks the Spanish official. "It is one commanding that you and your sister as witnesses immediately proceed to Nueva Ecija, the court of which, since the rebellion, is practically pacified, will soon be in session. It is official. It must be obeyed." He displays to her a document bearing the seal of Spain.

"Not before I have made my necessary arrangements," answers Maud.

"Oh, I shan't be married if they take me away!" cries Mazie. "Maud, stop them!"

"Certainly," replies her sister; then calls out of the window to their coachman who is now sleepily turning his ponies to take them to the stable: "Wait!"

"Where do you go?" asks Ludenbaum eagerly.

"That is not your business, sir," replies the girl, suspicion having come upon her; for, as she has gazed out she has caught a glimpse of *El Corregidor* whispering to the driver of her carriage.

"I am sorry, Señorita," remarks the under-secretary suavely, "that I officially shall be compelled to request your intentions."

"You can't have them, Señor!"

"You being now under the custody of the court, I must insist on them," replies the languid creature, waving his hand officially.

At this Herr Ludenbaum gives a grin and shrugs his fat shoulders deprecatingly, perfectly willing to leave the matter in the hands of Don Emilio, who is very proud of his position as an official of the potent Supreme Court. In addition the young man has been very well greased with gold for the occasion, and Maud,