



There was another slight pause and he went on:

"I have been thinking that possibly you were wrong about the significance of that empty envelope. Possibly those enigmatic persons intended that absence of a definite threat to imply the inconceivably terrible."

Now that he had started to talk about it, I wished that he had continued his silence. I could not understand how I had convinced him before, knowing all the while that I was without truth to support me. Certainly, now, pervaded as I was with that grim disquietude, it would be even more difficult to carry conviction with my words.

"Whatever they intended," I ventured, yielding a fraction of a point, "it seems to me that they'll have some difficulty in carrying it out. There are no portraits here to mutilate and no mirrors to smash. For the previous performances there must be some more or less simple explanation. Neither you nor I believe in the supernatural; therefore the things that happened at Cragholt were brought about by natural means, seemingly inexplicable as they were. Now no natural means can be brought to bear to perform any such legerdemain on this yacht. You know that. There's not a man here, except that poor old fisherman, that we don't know all and everything about. So, I say, no matter what they planned; this time they are outwitted." And even as I said it, I saw clearly before my vision these words: "Say not Heaven is high above! Heaven ascends and descends about our heads, daily inspecting us whosoever we are."

"Then you agree with me? You think something may have been planned?"

"I wouldn't pretend to interpret their symbolism," I answered evasively. "The empty envelope impressed me as synonymous with saying, 'Nothing more at present!' Even now I think that if they had meant to continue they would have said so. I'm almost sure they would."

I was quite sure, of course, but I dared not say so.

Cameron smoked on quietly for a while in a ruminative mood. Eventually he threw the end of his cigar over the rail, and leaned forward.

"I don't know," he said perplexedly. "I don't know."

This I hoped was to be the end of the matter, for tonight at least; but presently he began to talk of those first two letters, to conjecture, to wonder, to dissect phrases, to dig out subtleties of meaning from euphemistic expressions. And then I knew that he had every word memorized, just as I had.

Seven bells had struck and we were still talking. But now and then there were pauses in our converse—intervals of silence of varying length—during which I sat with my gaze stretching out over the black waters and my hearing strained for any unusual sound. More than once during the evening I thought I had detected far off the pounding note of a motor boat's exhaust, but had put the notion aside as too improbable for entertainment. Now, faintly, I seemed to hear it again; not so distant, but muffled.

I got up and stood close to the rail, and listened with ear bent. Then I determined to go to my cabin for a slight glass which I had included among my traps. But at that moment the sound, which I had made sure of, ceased, and I stood a second or two longer, expecting it to resume.

Altogether it was not over a minute or two that I stood there. It seemed much less than that. Then I turned with a question for Cameron. I wondered whether he had heard the sound too.

"I say, Cam—" I began, and stopped, startled, with his name half uttered.

His chair was empty. He was not on deck. I ran to the saloon. He was not there. I flung open the door of his stateroom. He was not there, either. I had the yacht searched for him. He was not on the yacht.

sails of a coasting schooner showed to westward. Trailing in our wake was our squalid salvage, the dory of the fisherman.

MacLeod, trained to coolness, retained his wits. Systematically he set to work. Likely and unlikely places aboard the yacht were looked into. Before I knew what he was about, we were going back over the way we had come with the searchlight swinging in a circle and a half-dozen sharp-eyed seamen scanning every square foot of rolling wave.

"I can't understand it," I kept repeating aloud, with senseless iteration. "I can't understand it."

I was standing alone, well forward, leaning over the rail. Presently MacLeod laid a hand on my shoulder.

"We can't do anything more than we are doing, Mr. Clyde," he said in his matter-of-fact way. "For my part, I can't understand it, either; but since Mr. Cameron's not aboard, there's only one conclusion, and that is that he's overboard. And since there was no one interested in throwing him there, then it seems very clear that he must have jumped."

"Jumped!" I cried, in irritation. "My God, man! Don't I tell you that I was not three feet away from him, and only for a minute or two? How could he have jumped without my hearing him? How could he even have got out of his chair, without my hearing him?"

The captain shrugged his shoulders. "There's no other explanation," he decided, conclusively.

"You mean he committed suicide?"

"Call it what you like, sir."

"But there was no reason for him to do such a thing," I objected.

"I understand he's been pretty ill, sir."

"He was ill, yes. But he was on the road to recovery." And then, with the realization that I was speaking of Cameron in the past tense, as though it were already settled that I should never see him alive again, a shiver of horror swept over me. I know MacLeod observed it, for he said:

"There's been a drop in the temperature, in the last half-hour. It'll be more comfortable in my cabin, sir, if you don't mind coming in, and talking the thing over a bit."

"Good Heavens, MacLeod," I exclaimed, turning on him with nervous savagery, "do you expect me to sit down and talk calmly at such a moment? I can't. It's all I can do to stand still here, for a minute at a time. I feel I must do something. It's torture to have one's hands tied this way."

"I think I know how you feel, sir. But walking the deck will do no good, and if you could calm yourself enough to talk it over quietly, we might get down to something that would guide us, so to speak."

"Guide us?" I repeated.

"Yes, sir. It's not impossible, you know, sir, that when he went overboard he was picked up."

The light from his cabin porthole illuminated us both, and now as he looked at me he must have seen my perplexity.

"You said yourself, sir," he explained, "that you thought you heard the exhaust of some sort of craft not far away."

It was this reminder, I think, which brought back my wool-gathering wits and steadied me to a perception of the real importance of the captain's plea. Of one thing, at least, I was assured: Cameron was not a suicide. How he could have gone over the taffrail without my seeing or hearing him, I should never be able to understand. But gone he was, and it lay upon me to discover by whose assistance this marvelous disappearance was accomplished. And so it came about that, controlling my futile unrest, I was presently seated in MacLeod's swivel chair, while he, from a place on the side of his berth, fired pointed questions at me, which I either answered as best I could or returned in kind.

"Now maybe it's none of my business, Mr. Clyde, but in view of tonight's occurrence I think it's pertinent to know why there was such a thorough inspection of the Sibylla before we sailed, and such a lot of caution regarding the crew." That was the first of his volleys, and for a moment it staggered me. I recognized, however, that this was not a time for quibbling, and as MacLeod had been for years a staunch soldier in Cameron's army of employees, I saw no harm in letting him know the truth.

"I'll tell you," I returned, frankly, "but it's not to go any further. In the past nine weeks Mr. Cameron has been receiving a series of threatening anonymous letters. The last one came a week ago today; and in it this was named as the date for the climax."

"Climax?" he repeated, questioningly.

"Yes. Today, the letter stated, Mr. Cameron would disappear."

The calm, phlegmatic young captain did not start. He simply narrowed his eyes in thought.

"That's odd," he said, gravely, "damned odd." And then, after a second's consideration, he asked: "Was that—but of course it was—why he took this cruise?"

"No," I told him. "That was not his reason; though it was mine."

I did not mean to be enigmatic, but I suppose I was, for MacLeod showed plainly enough that he failed to understand.

"You see," I went on, in elucidation, "Mr. Cameron did not know about this last threat. He was ill when the letter came, and we kept it from him."

It was evident to me that the captain disapproved, but he held his peace.

"What were the previous threats?" he asked, presently.

"Nothing definite," I answered. "Simply that on certain fixed days the

writers would demonstrate their power."

"And did they?"

"Most marvelously."

Again MacLeod was silent for a space.

"Under the circumstances, Mr. Clyde, don't you think it would have been better if you'd told me about this?"

"Mr. Cameron was very anxious that no one should know."

The captain compassed his right knee with his locked hands.

"All the same," he said, "he'd never have been spirited off this yacht if I'd a' known what was in the wind."

This statement annoyed me, and I resented it.

"What could you have done?" I asked. "I was with him almost continuously."

There came a strange, half-meditative, half-bold look in the man's eyes, and I was wondering what it portended, when, quite ignoring my question, he began speaking:

"You see there oughtn't to be any misunderstanding between you and me, sir. This is too serious a business to be bungled because I am only captain of this yacht and you are the owner's friend. So, if I speak plainly, sir, you'll understand why, and not think me disrespectful."

I smiled to reassure him, still puzzled, and added:

"Go straight ahead, captain. You are perfectly right."

"Well," he began, "I'll tell you, Mr. Clyde. Your story, as you told it to me, has some weak points in it. You say, for instance, that you were with Mr. Cameron almost continuously. Now I'm not mentioning the little while you were in here, early in the evening, but during the last quarter of an hour before you gave the alarm, you weren't with him, either."

I stared at the speaker for an instant in absolute dumb amazement.

"I don't know why you say that," I said, at length, more hurt than angered. "I told you that from the moment I last spoke to him, seated beside him there on the after-deck, until I turned from the rail and found him gone, not more than two minutes elapsed. And that was God's truth."

"You said you were listening for what you thought sounded like a motor boat, didn't you?"

"I did."

"And you were leaning over the taffrail, looking for it, weren't you?"

"I was."

"But you didn't see it?"

"No, I didn't see it; and I couldn't hear it after the first few seconds."

The captain had fixed a gaze on me that seemed aimed to penetrate to my soul's fiber. After my answer he was silent a moment. Then he said:

"Where were you, Mr. Clyde, when that boat—motor, tug, or whatever she was—crossed within ten feet of the dory we are towing?"

Had he struck me in the face I could not have been more dumfounded.

"What do you mean?" were the only words that came to me.

"I mean that the craft you have been talking about came up and went astern of us, ten or twelve minutes before you gave the alarm that Mr. Cameron had vanished under your eyes. I was on the bridge and saw it myself—just a black shape, without lights, and her exhaust muffled, just as you say. You tell me that you and Mr. Cameron had been sitting there for three hours, at least; that you heard seven bells strike; that it was not more than fifteen or twenty minutes after this that you got up and went to the rail, and that you only stood there two minutes."

"I told you all of that, and every word is the truth," I insisted, vehemently.

"And yet," he retorted accusingly, "and yet—eight bells had struck before you gave the alarm."

I had not thought of the time. In my panic it had not occurred to me, of course to ascertain the hour and minute. But Captain MacLeod knew. At sea they work by clock. At eight bells the watch had changed.

"My dear fellow," I exclaimed rising, "you certainly cannot for a moment suspect me of complicity."

He stood up, too; imperturbable.

"I just want those things explained, that's all," was his reply.

"And I can't explain them," I told him, candidly. "You say you saw the boat. I didn't. You say it was after midnight when I came to you. It may have been, I don't know. It may have been nearer twelve, when I went to the rail. My impression is that it was not. I'll admit it is mysterious. The whole awful thing is mysterious."

My candor seemed to relieve him.

"Well, Mr. Clyde," he said, with equal sincerity, "maybe I was outspoken, but I wanted to know what you'd say to the points that were puzzling me."

"You did perfectly right," I told him. "As you have said, there must be no secrets between us." And then, as I resumed my seat, I asked: "What about the fisherman? He hasn't evaded his guard, has he?"

MacLeod sat down again too.

"He's in where I put him, now," he answered with a shade of reluctance, "but—I'm not sure; it's almost as mysterious as the other—but I could have sworn I saw him come up that forward hatchway and go sneaking aft while I was on the bridge."

"When was that?" I pressed, eagerly.

"About a quarter of twelve."

"What did you do?"

"Nothing, just then. I waited. And while I was waiting I saw that black, spooky craft come out of the dark, and go skimming astern of us. A little after eight bells I came down from the bridge—I stopped there for

just a minute to have a word with Brandon when he came up—and then I went myself to look after Johnson and the man I'd set to watch him. The fisherman was in a bunk sound asleep, and the man swore he had been lying there snoring, for the past two hours. Who was it came up the ladder twenty minutes ago?" I asked. He looked at me as if he thought I was gone suddenly loony. "Before the watch changed?" he asked. I nodded. "Not a soul came or went," he said, "since I been here."

"And the boat without lights?" I questioned. "Did you inquire about her? Who else saw her?"

"I asked the lookouts; but—well, no, sir—and that's very strange to me—neither of them saw her. I gave them both a rating. If they weren't asleep I don't see how they could have missed her."

The thing was growing more and more baffling. MacLeod was the last man to be accused of imaginative fancies. He was thoroughly in earnest in what he had told me; and yet for neither of his statements had he the smallest corroboration. For my own part I was sure that, at the time he mentioned, no vessel of any description had passed anywhere near us.

"What did you make the craft out to be?"

"Well, sir, I couldn't say exactly. She was in sight only a minute, coming in range of our own lights. She looked more like a tug than anything else; but she had more speed than any tug I ever saw. She hadn't the lines of a yacht."

"She wasn't a pilot boat?"

"Oh, no, sir. New York pilots don't cruise this far east, and the Boston pilots wouldn't be so far away from home either."

I offered the captain a cigar, which he declined, filling his pipe in preference. When I lighted a cigar myself, I asked:

"I suppose you have some theory, MacLeod. You don't seriously think it was suicide?"

As usual he was slow to answer. After a thoughtful second, he said:

"I'd be sorry to think that, Mr. Clyde. Taking into consideration what you told me about the threat, and connecting that boat with it, it looks—" and then he paused, thoughtfully again. "It's not in possibility," he went on, after a second, "that they could have plucked him off with a line. But if that fellow I saw going aft—Oh, Lord, no, sir! It's past me to see a way out. All the same, we are keeping that craft in sight, and if we can only get thirty knots out of the Sibylla again, we'll find out what she is and what her business is, before morning."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

DIDN'T LIKE 'CHANGE.

Young Men Rebel Against Financier's Moral Code.

(Albany Dispatch to New York World.)

John H. Reynolds, Jr., the member of the brokerage firm of Eillingham Lawrence, who recently gave up his New York Stock Exchange seat, arrived in Albany yesterday to spend Christmas with his father, who is the Deputy Clerk of the Court of Appeals.

Mr. Reynolds would not be interviewed as to why he left the Stock Exchange, but it is known that he had become disgusted with the practices pursued there. He has said that he grew "tired of seeing an unsuspecting public robbed by unscrupulous men of wealth, traveling under the guise of respectability."

Mr. Reynolds' experience in New York has turned him to the study of socialism in the belief that that theory of government presents a means of removing the yoke now held on the country by men such as those who control the Stock Exchange. He is only 25 years of age, and his father says he never did care much for the business of dealing in stocks.

He will take a rest for a few months, after which he may enter the electrical business, being much interested in electricity. He became a member of the Stock Exchange firm through his relationship to Eillingham Lawrence.

Mr. Reynolds is a member of one of the oldest and most fashionable families in this part of the State. His grandfather was Judge Reynolds of the State Court of Appeals. Mrs. Franklin Townsend, one of the leading society women of Albany, is an aunt, and James A. Reynolds, the banker of Kinderhook, is an uncle.

LEAVES \$2,500 TO THORNWELL.

Orphanage at Clinton Benefits Under Judge Phlegar's Will.

Christiansburg, Va., Dec. 26.—The will of the late Judge Archer A. Phlegar was admitted to probate here today. It provides a bequest of \$2,500 to the Thornwell Orphanage, at Clinton, S. C.

B. M. Hagan, of the Bank of Christiansburg, is named as executor of the will, which was written aboard a steamer at Panama and dated September 4, 1912.

NEW YORK BAKERY ROBBED.

Store Broken Into and Articles Taken Tuesday Night.

Tuesday night the New York Bakery was entered and a number of articles were stolen. Two men, who gave their names as Baker and Kahn are supposed to be the perpetrators of the robbery and the police are now on the lookout for them.

The store, which is located on East Hampton avenue, was entered from the window, the wire screen being cut away and the sash raised. The two men had been working in the store during the day and it is thought that they unfastened the window catch before they left Christmas eve night. A bicycle, an overcoat, an assortment of extracts and other articles were stolen, but the money had all been locked up in the safe and the thieves did not succeed in getting this. The robbery was discovered Christmas morning and the police at once notified, but the two men had decamped during the night and were not to be found anywhere about town.

One of the men, Baker, claimed to have been a survivor of the Titanic disaster and told a pitiful tale Sunday upon reaching the city of his narrow escape from death and his struggle and misfortunes since landing. He was helped by persons who heard his story and was given a job by the proprietors of the bakery, who presented the men each with a couple of dollars Tuesday night when they left off work, telling them to come back the next day and help to clean up around the place. The men, or it is supposed that it was they, however, came back before the appointed time and did not wait on the proprietors to come to show them what to do.

HEAVY XMAS MAIL.

Holiday Mail Was Heavier Than Ever, but Couldn't Best Hitchcock's Numerous Hirelings.

Washington, Dec. 26.—Although the holiday mail was heavier in practically every section of the country than ever before the work of handling it was performed with less congestion and confusion than in previous years, according to reports received today by Postmaster General Hitchcock.

Slight interruptions were reported in a few sections of the country on account of weather conditions, but, aside from that, there was at no point in the service any congestion of the mails which was not under control.

A larger force than usual was put on this year to handle the Christmas mail in order that the capacity of the service could be tested in anticipation of the establishment of the parcels post, to be started January 1.

The reports made to Mr. Hitchcock shows that the holiday mail was delivered early Christmas day and conditions were generally normal throughout the service on Christmas night.

MARRIAGE LICENSE RECORD.

Two Couples Married at Court House Thursday.

Cupid seems to be very busy in and about the city. Each day a number of marriage licenses are issued to white and colored couples. The licenses issued Thursday were:

Mr. Philip M. Schlamp and Miss Ethel B. Hutcheson, of Henderson, Ky.; Mr. Walter Disher, Alcolu, and Miss Lizzie Jeffords, Brogdon; Mr. James B. Credle, Elizabeth City, N. J., and Miss Martha J. Elliott, Sumter.

Mr. Disher and Miss Jeffords were married in the court house by Clerk of Court L. I. Parrott during the early part of the afternoon. Later on in the day Mr. Credle and Miss Elliott were married in the same place, Mr. Parrott again officiating.

Licenses were issued to the following colored couples: Moreh Carolina, Columbia, and Janie Davis, Manchester; George Porter, Oswego, and Mariah McLeod, Sumter.

COLUMBIA BOY LOSES LIFE.

Russell Griffin Killed When Shotgun Goes Off.

Columbia, Dec. 27.—Russell Griffin, 12 years of age, was shot yesterday afternoon when a shotgun which he was holding was accidentally discharged. The load struck him in the face. The accident occurred about a mile and a quarter south of the Columbia, Georgetown & New York Steamship line landing on the bank of the Congaree river.

Young Griffin left his home on south Marion street at 12 o'clock yesterday in company with a friend, J. Howell, to go rabbit hunting. About 4 o'clock their dog drove something to earth in a hollow. Howell gave Griffin his gun to hold while he got a stick with which to fetch out the game. Young Howell had hardly finished cutting a switch when one of the two guns Griffin was holding was discharged, the shot striking him on the right side of the face, with an upward range. How the gun was discharged is not known.

R. D. Walker, coroner of Richland county, was notified and investigated the case. He found that the killing was accidental.

Cut the High Cost of Living.

*W. H. Chapman, Winnebago, Neb., tells how he did it. "My two children had a very bad cough and the doctor's medicines did them no good. I got a bottle of Foley's Honey and Tar Compound, and before it was all used the children were free and cured of their cough. I saved a doctor's bill for one 25c bottle of Foley's Honey and Tar Compound." No opiates. Sibert's Drug Store.—Adv.

Fire Thursday Night.

The hose wagons were called out about 7 o'clock Thursday night by an alarm of fire from the lower end of Purdy street. The fire was on the outskirts of the city and destroyed a four room negro dwelling house. A house next door caught, but the blaze was extinguished before any damage was done. In order to reach the fire more than one thousand feet of hose had to be stretched, only sufficient hose being on the wagons to furnish one line to the fire.

In sending in the alarm a most peculiar coincidence was noted. Two alarms were sent in for the fire exactly at the same time and the alarm system, not being provided for such cases, rang 31, while it registered 41, both numbers being wrong.

*A mean stuffy cold, with hoarse wheezy breathing is just the kind that runs into bronchitis or pneumonia. Don't trifle with such serious conditions. But take Foley's Honey and Tar Compound promptly. It is quick and beneficial results are in what you can expect from this medicine. It soothes and heals the inflamed passages. It stops the racking cough. Sibert's Drug Store.—Adv.

The Carrier Pigeon's Endurance.

The feat of an English-bred homing pigeon is attracting attention. Twelve days ago it escaped from the loft of Ernest Robinson at Westmount, Canada, and is now back in England. Whether it flew across the ocean or whether, for some of the distance, it shipped, is not known. However, if the bird flew all the way or half the way, it broke all other records for flights over water by pigeons.

In November, 1910, a carrier pigeon alighted on the British oil tank steamer Narragansett, when the ship was 420 miles from Sandy Hook. There were two other pigeons in the air at the time, but did they not alight.

In October, last, a carrier pigeon that had flown out of R. K. Meade's loft at Philadelphia was found on the United States army transport dock at San Francisco, but how it got across the continent was not learned.

In August, 1911, a pigeon flew from New Orleans to Baltimore in eleven hours; and in July, 1909, a pigeon flew from North Bay, Canada, to Baltimore, 510 miles, in nine hours and seventeen minutes at an average speed of over 1,600 yards a minute.—Augusta Chronicle.

A Girl's Midnight Ride.

To warn people of a fearful forest fire in the Catskills a young girl rode horse back at midnight and saved many lives. Her deed was glorious but lives are often saved by Dr. King's New Discovery in curing lung trouble, coughs and colds, which might have ended in consumption or pneumonia. "It cured me of a dreadful cough and lung disease," writes W. R. Patterson, Wellington, Tex., "after four in our family had died with consumption, and I gained 87 pounds." Nothing so sure and safe for all throat and lung troubles. Price 50c and \$1.00. Trial bottle free. Guaranteed by Sibert's Drug Store.—Adv.

The Memphis Commercial-Appeal repeats the demand that "Uncle Sam take a hand in the matter of regulating women's dresses." Just let your old Uncle attempt any foreign interference like that and he will need both hands to keep somebody's fingers out of his whiskers.—Wilmington Star.

His Stomach Troubles Over.

Mr. Dyspeptic, would you not like to feel that your stomach troubles were over, that you could eat any kind of food you desired without injury that may seem so unlikely to you that you do not even hope for an ending of your trouble, but permit us to assure you that it is not altogether impossible. It others can be cured permanently, and thousands have been, why not you? John R. Barker, of Battle Creek, Mich., is one of them. He says, "I was troubled with heartburn, indigestion, and liver complaint until I used Chamberlain's Tablets, then my trouble was over." Sold by all dealers.—Adv.

Frightful Polar Winds

blow with terrific force at the far north and play havoc with the skin, causing red, rough or sore chapped hands and lips, that need Bucklen's Arnica Salve to heal them. It makes the skin soft and smooth. Unrivaled for cold sores, also burns, boils, sores, ulcers, cuts, bruises and piles. Only 25c at Sibert's Drug Store.—Adv.

Dan McMahan was shot and mortally wounded by John Lemon in a row over a crap game at Monticello on Christmas Day.

*W. R. Fox, 195 W. Washington St., Noblesville, Ind., says: "After suffering many months with kidney trouble, after trying other remedies and prescriptions, I purchased a box of Foley's Kidney Pills which not only did me more good than any other remedy I ever used, but have positively set my kidneys right. Other members of my family have used them with similar results." Take at the first sign of kidney trouble. Sibert's Drug Store.—Adv.