

"THE GIRL IN THE SECOND CABIN" Easy to Gain With Yeast and Iron

By E. J. RATH

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Spencer Trumbull, son of a wealthy father, is ordered to take a sea voyage to Galveston for his health when he'd rather go to the Adirondacks because of the presence there of a certain girl. So he hires his old college and war-days chum,...

Trask rather approved of the amendment; he was glad she had included him as a person to be jointly concerned.

"If it wasn't for this," he said, looking down at the chair and the rug that lay across his knees, "of course I'd—"

"But you can't, of course; I quite understand."

Miss Kent's pensive lip drooped a little lower. She did not look angry; merely very sorrowful and perplexed.

"I beg pardon, ma'am, but which gentleman was it?" inquired the deferential voice of Keeler.

Trask turned upon his nurse a look of mild surprise and expectancy.

"A young man who wears glasses and a checked cap," answered Miss Kent. "The camera is quite a small one."

"I'll try to get the film for you, ma'am. Would you mind, just for a minute, keeping your eye on Mr. Trumbull?"

"I should be delighted."

Keeler anchored the wheel chair securely against the deckhouse, then...

that lay handy and bowed Miss Kent into it.

"You'll excuse me, Mr. Trumbull?"

"As long as you please, Keeler."

They watched him disappear in the direction of the forward deck; then Miss Kent turned to the invalid.

"There is something rather odd about your man," she commented.

"You've noticed that, have you?"

"He's rather curious-looking. He's a nurse, isn't he?"

"Very much so."

She sighed gently and looked out at the ocean.

"It seems like a woman's work," she murmured.

"You're interested in it?"

Miss Kent clasped her hands and dropped her head, thereby assuming a pose of strongly marked dejection.

Suddenly she looked up at him.

"You're not from the other side?" she asked.

"I'm an American."

"But have you been over there—since the war?"

"I've never been there."

Her lip drooped again.

She glanced at the rug that covered his knees.

"I thought perhaps you were conversing—from a wound."

Trask started to shake his head but hesitated. It had never occurred to him that he ought to have gone to Europe and had himself properly shrapnelled. Now it seemed that he had shirked a very palpable duty.

He felt suddenly demeaned in the eyes of the goddess. If only he could wear some sort of medal or cross hanging from a ribbon it would help amazingly. He did not even have one of his track trophies with him.

"You are interested in wounded folks?" he inquired in a woebegone tone.

Once more she clasped her hands and gazed straight in front of her. In a second or two he was astonished to see tears trembling on her eyelashes. It was even worse than he drew alongside of the deck chair.

"I know you couldn't understand," she said. "It's not to be expected! But I don't blame you in the least, Mr. Trumbull."

"I'm glad of that," fervently.

"No," she went on, shaking her head again. "Nobody seems to understand, not even my aunt and mother."

"That's a shame, I'm sure. Why didn't you go to Europe?"

"My father."

"Oh!"

Trask was beginning to see light.

"He didn't want you to go, I suppose?"

"Why, he would not hear of it!" exclaimed the goddess mournfully.

"He said—oh, I hate to think of what he said. He said it was silly, crazy—preposterous. He even said that I wouldn't be welcome!"

"I'm sure he was wrong there," observed Trask, studying the cameo profile.

"He said I'd just be in the way; that they only wanted trained ones."

"Well, I understand that did employ a good many of that kind," Trask ventured apologetically.

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supposed. He felt wholly discarded from her consideration.

"A Woman's Sympathies."

"I have had—a very great disappointment," she answered.

"I'm sorry, if that will do any good."

"Thank you. I—I wanted to go to Europe."

"You mean that you wanted to be a nurse?"

"I wanted to give them a woman's care and sympathy. I wanted to find my place in the world. I wanted to nurse these heroic men!"

"Which ones?" asked Trask curiously.

"Any of them!"

"You mean you had no preferences? You didn't care whether they were Allies or what?"

Miss Kent shook her head and continued to stare fixedly at the ocean. One tear was traversing her cheek, and she hastily dabbed at it with a handkerchief.

"It made no difference to me who they were. I wanted to nurse them. But I don't suppose you understand."

"Not exactly, I'm afraid."

"Of course you cannot. You're a man. You can't know a woman's sympathies or a woman's heart. You can't understand the yearning!"

Involuntarily she raised a hand to her breast—"to sit by the side of a sufferer who has offered his manhood to his country, whatever that country may be; to help him through the dark hours, to cheer him, to give him a woman's consolation."

"You're a graduate nurse?"

Miss Kent looked at him in astonishment.

"If, why, no, indeed! I—I have never had to work."

"Didn't you ever practice any in a hospital?"

"Never."

"But I should have imagined, if you were so much interested—"

Miss Kent interrupted him with a gentle shake of her head. She smiled wanly.

"I know you couldn't understand," she said. "It's not to be expected! But I don't blame you in the least, Mr. Trumbull."

"I'm glad of that," fervently.

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"In both—"

"Two bullets," he amended quickly. "One in each leg."

She uttered a quick exclamation of concern.

"But where—how—when?"

"It was in a fight with—with burglars."

"Horror!"

"Oh, it wasn't so bad, you know; nothing to speak of."

"Burglars! Where?"

"At our home," said Trask, uneasily. "There were three of them."

"And you alone?"

"It just happened that I was alone—yes."

"At night?"

"Oh, of course. They work at night, mostly."

"Please tell me all about it!"

"Really, there isn't much to tell," he murmured modestly. "It happened to be working down at the bank that night; it was rather late."

William Hamilton Trask blushed properly. It seemed the least he could do, under the circumstances, and he accomplished the feat without forcing himself. That it was the genuine blush of a guilty conscience did not trouble him greatly at the time. She was sweet, womanly, sympathetic. He liked to have her near him. Only one way, apparently, was open to him, and he had taken it.

True, he had an inward twinge or two. But what was a twinge to the gentle presence of a pretty girl?

Just as I was getting ready to leave—" "I thought it happened at your home!" "Did I say so? What I meant, of course, was that it happened in our home town; not at my residence."

She nodded. "Well, they just came in to make an attack on the safe and ran across me. I got hold of the cashier's pistol. One of them shot me in one leg and one in the other; I forgot just which did which. There was a good deal of confusion."

"But the third—the other burglar?"

"I shot him."

"Did he—"

"I regret to say that he did," said Trask, in a hollow voice. "Even though he was a burglar, I had no animosity against him, but I had to defend myself. The Coroner understood the situation perfectly. The other two got away. And—well, that's about all of it. It's a rather painful subject."

Lucille Kent surveyed the occupant of the wheel chair with a mingling of awe and admiration.

"It was horrible—but splendid!" she half-whispered.

Trask bit his lip and looked seaward. He had taken the plunge. Perhaps the yarn would last as far as Galveston. At any rate, it had been forced upon him.

As a completely sound young man it was evident that he would have stood no chance whatever. As a nervous invalid it seemed that his prospects were not much brighter. He simply had to be wounded, preferably by bullets. He only regretted he could not have worn a uniform and been shot charging a trench.

"Will you ever—walk again?" she asked, hesitatingly.

"Oh, beyond a doubt. That part of it's all right. The doctor says I'm liable to walk any time—tomorrow, next week. It's uncertain."

The goddess remained silent for several minutes, during which period she seemed to be thinking profoundly. Then she said softly:

"You have taught me something, Mr. Trumbull."

"Honestly?"

"Yes—how to be brave and patient in suffering."

"Oh, I say, Miss Kent! It isn't so much as all that."

"But it is," she affirmed earnestly.

Keeler shook his head lugubriously.

"I regret to say, ma'am, that he refused to give it up."

Trask was plainly annoyed. It was unpleasant to have this man fall him, after he himself had made such amazing strides.

"I'm surprised, Keeler," he said, in a severe tone.

"I was, sir, too. I thought of course he'd give it up. He had the appearance of a gentleman. But it seemed he was not."

"But what are we going to do?" gasped Miss Kent.

"Oh, it's all right, ma'am," interposed Keeler, hastily. "There won't be any pictures. You see, when he wouldn't let me have the film I had to do something about it. So I took the camera."

"Took it!"

"There was no other way, Mr. Trumbull. I'm sorry, sir; I didn't want any disturbance. I hope you'll stand by me, sir."

"Where's the camera?"

"Overboard, sir."

Trask inspected his nurse with new interest and the latter displayed embarrassment under the scrutiny. He shifted his feet and deliberately avoided the wondering gaze of Miss Kent. He had the air of a boy caught in an orchard.

"And the owner of this camera—what about him?" demanded Trask.

"That's all right, sir; don't worry. He's all right. I was very sorry he attacked me, sir; it ought not to have been necessary at all. But his coming around very nicely now, sir. Why, he wasn't out over thirty seconds, Mr. Trumbull."

Trask whistled gently and stole a glance at his companion. It was evident she did not understand much of it, except that the film had been consigned to the deep.

(To Be Continued.)

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"I shall read to you sometimes, if you don't mind, he said.

"Sometimes?" he echoed. "Always! That is, I should say, all the time you can spare."

"If there was only something else I could do," she mused.

"I have a very capable nurse—unfortunately, he—but here he is now."

Keeler was standing before them, an expression of meek apology on his face.

"You have the film?" she asked, anxiously, half rising from her chair.

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