

**FULLER
ALVARADO
MORTIMER**

A. D. 2000

Alvarado Fuller

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Alvarado M. Fuller

A. D. 2000

PREFACE

Lest originality of title and theme be denied, it is but justice to myself to state that both were assumed in November, 1887. My thanks are due to Lieutenant D. L. Brainard, Second Cavalry, for the true copy of the record of the Greely party left in the cairn at the farthest point on the globe ever reached by man – 83 degrees 24 minutes North Latitude, 40 degrees 46 minutes West Longitude.

The Author.

CHAPTER I

“Number three! half-past eleven o’clock – and all’s well!”

“All is well!” came the response from the sentry at the guard-house, while the sharp click of his piece as he brought it to his shoulder and the heavy tread of his retreating footsteps were all that was heard to break the stillness that reigned supreme throughout the garrison.

It was a dark, dreary, foggy night. The heavy atmosphere seemed laden with great masses of fleeting vapor, and the walks of the post and the ground surrounding them were as wet as if a heavy shower had just spent its force.

Such was the Presidio of San Francisco, California, a military post of the United States government, on the night of November 17th, 1887. The lights of the garrison made little effect upon that thick and saturated atmosphere; yet the little that they did make only seemed to add more to the depth of the surrounding gloom.

In the officers’ club-room, near the main parade, was gathered a jolly party of old and young officers. The rooms were handsomely, even superbly, furnished. The billiard-tables were in full blast; the card-tables were occupied; while many sat and chatted upon the various military topics which are ever a part of the soldier’s life.

In a set of officers’ quarters, some distance away from the main parade, were assembled three subalterns of the line. The room was bright and cheerful, and the decanters upon the table showed that they knew of the good cheer of the world. The furniture upon which the officers sat and reclined, as also about the room, gave evidence of refinement and education; while the cases stacked with books, near the entrance, bespoke a tendency and desire on the part of the occupant of the quarters for the improvement of his mind. A grate fire in the angle threw its cheerful rays upon those present, while the luxuriousness and warmth of the whole room was in direct contrast with the gloominess and cold without.

Opening from the main room through a curtained door was a second room, the inside of which was a study. There was no carpet upon the floor, and the boards gave evidence of having been used by many feet. Tables containing jars and many curious vessels, wires in every direction, bottles filled and empty, maps and drawings, and instruments of peculiar form and shape, were seen about the room.

In one corner was a large Holtz machine, whose great disc of glass reflected back the rays from the lights in the front room.

The three men were soldiers and officers of the army.

In the center of the room, by a small table upon which was a roll of paper, with one hand holding down the pages, while the other was raised in a commanding gesture, stood Junius Cobb, a lieutenant in the cavalry arm of the service. Sitting in an easy-chair near the fire, with his legs on the fender and his eyes watching every movement of the speaker, reclined Lester Hathaway; while midway between the table and the right side of the room, in a large rocker, sat Hugh Craft.

Lester Hathaway was a graduate of the military academy of the United States, as was also Hugh Craft; both were lieutenants in the army – the former in the infantry, and the latter in the artillery branch of the service.

Lester Hathaway was about twenty-eight years of age, tall and slim, fair-haired, a pleasing face, languid air, and a blasé style. To him the world was one grand sphere for enjoyment; it was his life, his almost every thought, as to how he could pass his time in an easy and amusing manner. Balls, parties, and dances were his special vocations. With him there was no thought of the true hardships of life.

Young and handsome, courted by the ladies, he could not understand how it was that others should occupy their minds with subjects of research and study.

Hugh Craft was of a different type; yet, like Hathaway, he was tall and thin, and about the same age; but here the likeness terminated. He was darker than his companion, with sharp features, an

aquiline nose, and a chin denoting great firmness. His eye was piercing, and wandered from one object to another with the rapidity of lightning. He was much more of a student than Hathaway, delighting in all that portion of the sciences touching the marvelous; a good listener to the views of others. Altogether, Hugh Craft was a man worthy to be the partner of a scientific man in a great enterprise.

Junius Cobb, the central figure in the room, deserves more than a passing description. He was a man about thirty-three years of age, of medium height, but of a full and well-developed form, black eyes, a pleasing countenance, a dark mustache nearly covering his lips, square chin, and eyebrows meeting in the center of the face – all tokens of a great firmness and decision. He was one who had given many of his days and nights to hard study in science, in political economy, and, in fact, had taken a deep interest in almost all of the various progressive undertakings of his day.

Outside of his duties, Junius Cobb had employed every spare moment of his time in experimenting in chemistry and electricity. The room off the sitting-room, where the three gentlemen were gathered this dark and foggy night, was his workshop, into which no man was permitted to go save he himself. Its mysterious contents were known to no other person.

His friends would come and visit him, and sit for hours talking and chatting, but no invitation was ever accorded them to enter that single room.

“Craft,” and Cobb pointed his finger at that personage in an impatient manner, “we have often discussed these matters, I will admit, but it is a theme I like to talk upon. Do you believe in the immortality of the soul?”

“Why, of course,” replied that person, looking surprised.

“And you, too, Hathaway?” continued Cobb, addressing the other.

“Most certainly I do,” was the reply.

“Now, do either of you believe that the living body can be so prepared that it will continue to hold the soul within its fleshly portals for years without losing that great and unknown essence?” and Cobb fixed his sparkling eyes upon his listeners.

“Yes,” answered Craft; “but by God alone.”

“I do not mean by God,” quickly returned the other. “God is all powerful; but by man?”

“Then, of course, I would say that it cannot be done.”

“But if I were to show you that it was a fact, an accomplished fact, you would, of course, admit it?”

“No, Cobb. Look here, old fellow,” pettishly exclaimed Hathaway, rising from his chair, “what is all this about, anyway?”

Cobb glanced at him with an expression of pity, and quickly replied:

“I mean, Hathaway, that it is in my power to hold the life of mortal man within its living body for an unlimited time. I mean that I can take your body, Hathaway, and so manipulate it that you will be, to all appearance, dead; but your soul, or whatever you choose to call it, will still be in your body; and further, that after a certain time you will again come to life, having all your former freshness and youth.”

Cobb stood at the table with his hand upon the pages of his book, and a smile upon his face which seemed to say, “Deny it if you can.”

Hathaway and Craft looked at him in amazement. These men had known Cobb to be a student, but neither of them had ever thought him demented.

The proposition advanced by him seemed so terribly contrary to all the principles of science, natural law, and life, that neither of them could believe that the man was in earnest.

Both Hathaway and Craft had often come to Cobb’s quarters, and exchanged ideas with him concerning various and many topics; both knew him to be a student of chemistry and philosophy, and that he worked many hours in his little back room. They knew that he worked with chemicals and electricity, and both knew him to be a very peculiar man, yet neither of them had ever before seemed

to be imbued with the belief that the man was of unsound mind. The grave and startling statement advanced by Cobb had so astonished them that it was impossible to think him sane.

“Yes,” continued Cobb, “I have found this power. I have no doubt that it strikes you with amazement that I should even suggest such an almost preposterous theory. I have no doubt that you almost think me insane; but my researches in the past few years have been rewarded by the most startling discoveries. We have all imagined, for many years, that as soon as the body was deprived of air for a considerable time, life would become extinct, or, in other words, that life could not exist without air. Such is not the case – ah! do not start,” he exclaimed, seeing both Hathaway and Craft bend forward inquiringly in their chairs. “I repeat, such is not the case. Without the oxygen in the air, the blood of man would be white, yet it would possess all the properties necessary to continue life. But one thing must not be confounded with this statement: oxygen is necessary for life *with* action, but not necessary for life *without* action. A strange statement, is it not? Am I tedious?” he asked, looking at his listeners.

“No; not at all,” they both exclaimed. “Please continue, for we are very much interested.”

“Well,” and Cobb’s eyes flashed as he warmed up to his subject, “it was long ago discovered that there was a peculiar odor arising upon the passage of a current of electricity through oxygen gas; this was also perceived even in working an electrical machine. This odor was named ozone. Both of you gentlemen are sufficiently proficient in chemistry for me to pass over the various methods by which ozone can be manufactured, yet I think it quite necessary that I should state a few facts about this very remarkable gas, if, indeed, it can be called a gas; it is really allotropic oxygen. Now, oxygen can be put into a liquid state, or even into a solid state; yet it is most difficult to keep it in either of those conditions – so much so that it would be of no use for the purposes for which I desire to use it. Oxygen is contracted by passing an electric spark through it, and ozone is perceived by the peculiar odor arising therefrom. If the intensity of the current is increased sufficiently, the oxygen is proportionately decreased in bulk. Suffice it to say that oxygen can be reduced millions of times in bulk by this simple method, always provided that the electrical energy was sufficient at starting. You will perceive,” and he hastily quitted the room, entered his workshop, and returned with a small bottle fitted with a tight stopper, and containing apparently a stick of camphor – “you will perceive,” he continued, “when I open this bottle, a most peculiar odor, a lightness in the atmosphere, a seeming renewal of life, and a sense of languidness passing over you.”

Saying this, he took out the glass stopper and passed the bottle two or three times in front of Hathaway and Craft. As the bottle was moved from side to side, both of them experienced a strange sensation; it seemed that the air was heavily charged with a something that gave them feelings of unutterable lightness, of calm repose, and intense satisfaction. The lights danced about in thousands of forms, yet each appeared to possess some true and beautiful shape. They moved, they walked and ran, yet no effort seemed to be required. It was as if they were a part of some living thing, yet not a part: a part of it in that they moved and had feelings coincident with it, yet not a part because no effort was required, of brain or muscle, to be a part of it. For a moment it seemed to each of them that a state of exertionless existence had been reached, and then each knew no more. They lay in their chairs apparently lifeless.

Cobb quickly replaced the stopper in the bottle, and took from his nostrils two small pieces of sponge, which had been saturated in some kind of solution.

Returning to the back room, he replaced the bottle on the shelf from which he had taken it, and came back to his position by the table.

He watched Hathaway and Craft a few minutes, when, seeing no appearance of reviving, he arose and opened the windows and wheeled their chairs around so that the cool night air could strike them full in the face. This done, he sat himself down near the table and seemed to watch with great earnestness the countenances of his two friends.

He had sat this way but a moment, when a sigh escaped the lips of Craft, his eyes opened, and he gazed about him with a most puzzled and dazed expression.

Cobb sprang quickly to his side, and presented a glass of wine to his lips.

“There,” he said, “take some of that, old fellow; you will feel like your former self in a moment.”

Craft drank the liquor without saying a word; then, raising himself, he looked Cobb in the eyes, and asked:

“Have I been asleep, Cobb, or what is the matter? I feel as if I had just awakened from a most delicious slumber, a most refreshing one, and yet I had no dreams, nor does it seem that I am fatigued in the least.”

At this moment Hathaway opened his eyes, and also in a dazed manner viewed his surroundings.

“Why, bless me, I have been asleep!” he exclaimed.

Cobb quickly filled a second glass of wine and gave it to him, saying: “Drink that; you will feel all right in a jiffy.”

Hathaway emptied the glass, and then, looking at Craft, said:

“I know now; it was the bottle, or rather the contents, that has caused us both to fall asleep.”

“Yes,” said Cobb, “it was the contents of that bottle that has caused you both to enter the first stages of death.”

“How long has this sleep continued?” asked Craft.

“About ten minutes.”

“And was I also asleep as long?” asked Hathaway.

“Yes; a little longer,” returned Cobb. “Craft awoke first.”

Pausing to light a cigar, he then resumed:

“How do you feel – sick or languid?”

“Oh, as for me, not at all,” spoke up Craft. “I cannot say that I feel any ill effect from the drug.”

“Nor I,” said Hathaway, “except that I am a little dry,” with a laugh.

“Then take some of this wine,” and Cobb filled a glass for each of them. “It will brace up your nerves.”

They drank the wine, and appeared to suffer no evil effects from their enforced sleep.

“Will you not smoke, also?” asked Cobb, as he passed over a box of fine Havana cigars. Each took one, and Cobb laid the box aside.

Soon the clouds of smoke rising to the ceiling renewed the scene of warmth and sociability which had prevailed before the uncorking of the bottle of ozone.

“You, gentlemen,” said Cobb, drawing his chair to the fire, and taking a seat near the others, “have seen pure ozone in its solid state, and you both have felt its effect. It is the life-giving principle of oxygen. Ozone is everywhere; in the air, of course; in all creation, in fact. I do not wish to tire you, but if you desire, I will explain why I said that I had the power to hold life in the human body for an indefinite time.”

“You will not tire us. Pray go on; I, for one, am most anxious to know more of this wonderful discovery of yours,” quickly returned Craft.

“I also can listen for hours to your words,” answered Hathaway.

“Then, I will explain to you my researches in this direction;” and Cobb arose and entered his little back room, soon returning with a good-sized box, which he laid upon the table.

Craft and Hathaway watched him with an earnestness which gave evidence of the interest they took in the strange theories which he had advanced. Indeed, it was a most strange, not to say terrible, power for a man to possess – that of holding the soul of man within its fleshly portals during his pleasure.

After Cobb had placed the box upon the table, he opened the roll of papers which he had before him at the time he got the bottle of ozone. Referring to one of the pages, he looked toward Hathaway and said:

“Can you tell me how many cubic feet of air the average man requires in every twenty-four hours?”

Hathaway, taken by surprise, hesitated, blushed, and admitted that he had forgotten the exact amount.

“Well,” continued the other, quickly, “it is not to be supposed that you should remember the answer to such a question, so I will tell you. A healthy man, in action, consumes about 686,000 cubic inches in every twenty-four hours. Now, what I wish to have you understand by that, is this: that the average man requires about 137,200 cubic inches of oxygen in every twenty-four hours. This is the accepted way of putting it; in reality, he needs the ozone contained in that amount of oxygen. I do not desire that you should receive the impression that the oxygen is not needed for the man, but that the ozone only is required for the continuance of life where there is no action. I may surprise you when I say that each of you draws into your lungs, every day, over seven pounds of oxygen gas, but such is the case. Now, in those seven pounds of oxygen there are just two grains of pure ozone. Do not interrupt me,” as Craft attempted to speak; “I know what you would say – that that is contrary to the accepted opinion on the subject, and that the amount is much greater – but let me tell you that my researches have found it entirely different: two grains only, to seven pounds of oxygen, or thirty-five pounds of common air. You will perceive by the above that each of you requires nearly two grains of ozone per day, or about 700 grains per year. Now, if by any freak of nature you could remain in a perfectly passive state, doing nothing, exercising no action at all, this amount of 700 grains would fall to about 400 grains; that is, the blood would require that amount to continue to perform its vital functions. Thus you see that you would require for the maintenance of life for a hundred years, 40,000 grains. This is equivalent to nearly seven pounds of ozone. Ozone, as you have already ascertained, cannot be taken into the system through the nostrils without serious consequences. It is too powerful, and would soon cause paralysis and death; but it can be taken into the system through the pores of the body without danger to life. Again, ozone can be kept in the solid state under the pressure of two atmospheres; reduce this pressure, and it will begin to evaporate. Crystals of stonetic acid, you both know, quickly decompose carbonic acid gas. Now, the whole secret is this: If insensibility is first produced by any of the various means at our command, and the subject is then placed in a receptacle sufficiently strong to withstand a pressure of over two atmospheres, and surrounded by crystals of ozone and stonetic acid in certain proportions, insensibility will continue, and the subject will in no way change, save a slight decrease in weight. Life is there, and will continue there until the ozone is entirely exhausted. To compensate for the loss in weight, the subject is bound about the abdomen with cloths saturated in certain oils and preparations which I have ascertained will furnish all the nourishment required for a given period.”

Craft and Hathaway could not help looking at this man in amazement.

Was this the man with whom they had played billiards, with whom they had drunk and associated, never dreaming that he was engaged in any such investigations? Was he, indeed, crazy? and were they the listeners to a lunatic’s chattering discourse?

Such were the thoughts that passed through the minds of both.

Cobb stood watching the effect of his words upon them. He noted every change in their countenances; he read every thought as it came to their minds. He spoke not a word, waiting for them to give utterance to the skeptical ideas which he knew they entertained.

“It is too strange! It is too contrary to natural law and science! It is impossible!” and Craft arose as if to go.

“Yes, Cobb,” said Hathaway, “this is too much; it is a fancy you have gotten, but a fancy which can never be realized. You have allowed your theories to become shadows, your shadows to become tangible, but the tangibility is apparent to no one but yourself.” He too arose from his chair.

A smile played upon the lips of Cobb, a smile of perfect self-satisfaction. His eyes shone as if his very soul centered in them.

“Look!” he cried; “look! and behold for yourselves whether my words are worthy of consideration!”

Saying this, he raised the lid of the box on the table; then, stepping back and pointing his finger at it, exclaimed, in a tone of command, a tone of majestic confidence in his own power:

“Look! Behold life in death; death in life!”

Craft took a step forward, and glanced into the box. A puzzled and ludicrous expression came over his face, his lips parted, then, finally, his white teeth showed themselves as he gave vent to a loud and prolonged laugh.

Hathaway had by this time advanced and obtained a view of the contents of the box.

“A cat, by all that’s holy!” he exclaimed; “a poor dead cat!” and he too joined in the merriment of his friend.

Cobb stood still, not in the least endeavoring to check their hilarity, but waiting for them to get through.

Again the others looked at the cat in the box, and again they laughed heartily; but seeing Cobb so quiet, it at last dawned upon them that there was something peculiar in the surroundings of the animal.

In the box which had been brought out and placed upon the table was a large Maltese cat, lying upon its side on an asbestos pillow. The head of the animal was wrapped with bandages, as was also the under part of the body for a space of about two inches above its thighs. The cushion upon which it lay was placed within what appeared to be a zinc coffin of something under ten inches in height. At the head of the cat was a small saucer-shaped vessel with a perforated top, while surrounding the whole was a space of over four inches in width. In this space were the remains of a few crystals of some white substance. The box seemed to be lined with glass, and a glass top covered the whole, its sides seemingly glued to the sides of the box.

“Come,” said Craft, noticing that Cobb was waiting for some remark from one or the other of them; “tell us, Cobb, why you have that cat lying in that box. Is this the principle you have been speaking of? Are we really to believe that you have in that case an animal undergoing the treatment you have spoken of?”

“Gentlemen,” answered Cobb, with a feeling of pride, “you have guessed it. One year ago to-night, at twelve o’clock, I caused this poor animal to become insensible; then placing it in this case, with its mouth and nostrils covered, with bandages of nourishment about its loins, with a cup of stonetic acid at its head, and crystals of ozone surrounding the body, I hermetically sealed the case. From my experiments, I ascertained that the amount of ozone necessary for the continuance of life in an animal of this size, and for a period of one year, was 1,425 grains. This amount I put into the case. You can easily see how near correct I was in my calculations, for there are not over ten grains of ozone left on the floor of the box to-night. I asked you here, gentlemen, not only to listen to my lecture on ozone, but to witness the return to life of this animal.”

All laughter in Hathaway and Craft had changed to a grave attention to all that was said by their friend.

At last it seemed to them that there was something, indeed, in the theory he advanced. In an attitude of intense expectation, they awaited his next move.

“As I have said,” continued Cobb, “that cat was placed in this condition one year ago to-night. It is my intention to bring it to life again this evening; but before we begin, let us take a glass of wine and light our cigars, and then to business.”

He filled their glasses from the decanter on the table, and each took a fresh cigar from the box.

Craft again sat himself down in his chair and leisurely puffed clouds of smoke from his mouth, while Hathaway stood with his back to the fire.

Both were now prepared for anything which Cobb might advance, for it seemed to each of them that it was no longer a question of “Is it true?” but a “fact only to be proved.”

Cobb, having left the room, soon returned with a small box containing six cells of Grenet battery and about ten feet of wire attached to two pieces of copper. These he placed upon the table.

Taking the box containing the cat, he carried it to the front window and set it upon a chair. Entering once again his little work-room, he brought out three sponges and as many strips of common linen, and then from a bottle in his hand he sprinkled the sponges well. Approaching Craft, he said:

“Let me bind this upon your nostrils, and at the same time caution you not to open your mouth, but to breathe through the linen bandage and sponge.”

Craft arose and submitted to the operation of having his face below the eyes covered by the sponge and bandages.

Cobb then approached Hathaway and treated him in like manner.

This having been finished, he wrapped his own face carefully with the third bandage. His mouth was purposely left free that he might explain the few remaining acts in his strange comedy.

Going across the room, he threw open the window to its full extent; then coming back again, he opened the window before which stood the chair containing the box. Turning to his friends, he answered their mute inquiries by stating that he took these precautions lest the remaining ozone in the case should, in escaping, overpower them. The air passing through the room from the back window would quickly carry out the evaporating ozone.

“I will break the glass top of the case,” he said, “and quickly seize the cat, withdraw it, and throw the box out of the window.”

Cobb now adjusted the cloth about his mouth, while the others came closer to him that they might not miss any part of the proceedings. Taking a small hammer from a shelf near by, he struck the glass a smart blow, shattering it into many pieces; quickly seizing the cat, he drew it out of the case and threw the latter out of the window. Next, tearing off the bandages about its loins and head, he clapped the two copper discs against the body of the animal – one upon its back and one upon its breast, just over the heart; then dropping the zincs into the fluid of the battery, completed the circuit by touching a push-button.

The effect was startling: the poor animal gave a gasp, a shiver ran through its frame, its chest heaved a moment, and it breathed.

Quickly taking it to the fire, he rubbed it briskly with a towel for a couple of minutes, and then laid it down upon the warm rug near the grate, that its body might receive the heat from the fire.

The animal lay but a moment where he had placed it; it soon arose on its legs, walked around once or twice, and then quietly lay down in a new position.

Taking the bandages from his face, Cobb told the others to do likewise. The air in the room was only slightly impregnated with the odor of ozone.

The windows being closed, a saucer of milk was placed before the cat, and the animal instantly arose and lapped its contents.

It seemed to all present as if the animal had just arisen from a sound sleep. There was no indication in its manner that it had undergone any new or unusual treatment.

It was strange! It was more than strange – it was marvelous!

No longer was there any doubt in the mind of either Craft or Hathaway. The theory had been plainly and truly demonstrated. Cobb had become possessed of a power unknown to any other living man. What would he do with this power? was the question that immediately came to the mind of each. Would he use it for good, or for evil? Was it a play-thing that he had discovered? or had he worked out this problem for some great and grand undertaking?

“What next?” inquired Hathaway. “What is the next act in this drama?”

“To bed,” said Cobb, glancing up at the clock. “It is now ten minutes past one. To-morrow evening meet me here. Say nothing, not even a word, about what you both have witnessed and heard to-night. Have I your word?” he asked, inquiringly.

“Yes, certainly,” they replied together; “if you wish us not to speak of it.”

“I do indeed wish it, and trust that nothing will cause you to divulge a single part of this evening’s occurrences. Good-night!”

Shaking their hands at the door, he again said good-night as they descended the stairway.

Returning, he filled the grate with more coal, and threw himself down, without undressing, upon the cot in the corner of the room. A moment later, the deep sound of his breathing and the low purring of the cat on the rug were the only sounds heard in the room.

CHAPTER II

The next evening, Junius Cobb again welcomed the arrival of his friends to his apartments.

The November rains had set in in reality, and like the preceding evening, the post wore an aspect of moistened gloom.

Cobb's friends had come earlier than usual, for the events of the previous evening were so vividly before their minds that it was impossible to await the arrival of the conventional hour for calling upon their friend.

They rattled up the stairs, knocked respectfully at his door, and entered without waiting for his well-known voice.

He was sitting in his easy-chair, but arose at the first sound of their approach, and as they entered, cordially grasped the hand of each.

"Boys, I am glad you came earlier than is your custom," he said, motioning them to chairs.

"We could not wait for nine o'clock," replied Hathaway, breathless from running up the stairs.

"No; we couldn't wait," chimed in Craft. "I do believe I dreamed of nothing but ozone, dead cats, chemistry, and the like, all night. I am, in fact, weary for want of sleep."

Cobb did the honors of his house, and soon all three were quietly sitting, and sending clouds of smoke airily toward the ceiling.

"Any news at the club?" inquired Cobb of Craft.

"Nothing out of the usual run. Dilly, the young one from the Point, and the others are working hard at a game of cinch."

"A good night for a quiet game, or for a quiet chat, too," said Hathaway.

"Yes," said Cobb; "but would you rather play cinch to remaining here and listening to what I have to say?"

"Oh, no, my dear boy; excuse us. I left them all in their glory, and hunted up Craft, that we might the sooner get here, for I have no doubt that you have some remarkable disclosures to make to-night."

"You are right; I have – and some that will probably strike you as being the most fanciful and, perhaps, untenable, you have ever heard," returned the other, looking his two listeners in the eye.

"Let that be seen in the future," they both exclaimed.

"What is your pay?" abruptly asked Cobb, after a moment's silence.

"You ought to know – \$1,500 a year."

"And yours the same?" to Craft, "both being dismounted officers."

"Certainly; and a mighty small sum for a man to put on style, go to parties, and send bouquets and the like, I assure you," returned that personage.

"And mine is but a trifle more. We are all poor, impecunious gentlemen, are we not?"

"Yes, decidedly so, I fear; for I am not aware that either of us has anything outside of his pay," answered Craft.

"And what are our chances for promotion? The way things go now, I will have to serve fifty years to become a colonel. Of course, I cannot serve that long, as I would be over the maximum age," gloomily broke in Hathaway.

"It is even so, gentlemen," and Cobb knocked the ashes from his cigar. "Promotion in the army is so exceedingly slow that none of us can expect to reach a colonelcy; in fact, the most that is before us is a majority. Here we are, gentlemen of thirty and thirty-five years of age, giving our lives and brains to this government for a paltry \$2,000 a year. I, for one, intend to remedy this sad state of affairs," and he arose and walked across the room in an impatient manner.

The others watched him curiously. His manner of action spoke volumes, and indicated plainly that there was something he had to tell them in conjunction with his remarks.

Cobb strode nervously across the room for a minute, then suddenly approaching the table, he filled to the brim a glass with whisky from one of the decanters. Raising it to his lips to drink its contents, he suddenly paused, and begging the pardon of his guests, invited them to join him. His thoughts were not upon his actions.

“Listen,” he exclaimed, as their glasses were laid upon the table; “are you ready to give me your strictest attention?”

“We are all ears, and will gladly listen to all you have to say,” answered Craft, while Hathaway’s eyes and manner betokened the curiosity he could not conceal.

“Are you both willing to give your oaths that what I tell you to-night will never, under any circumstances, be divulged by either of you to a living soul, or ever put in writing, or in any manner made possible to be known?”

Both of the men gave him this promise.

Cobb arose and took a small Bible from the mantel over the grate, and advancing to the table, held it in his right hand, requesting each of the others to place his hand upon it. They arose from their chairs and placed their hands upon the sacred volume.

“Repeat after me,” said Cobb: “I swear by all that I hold sacred, by my hope of salvation in the after life, and by my belief in a just and good God, that I will not divulge or disclose, by tone of voice, or writing, or other symbol, that which maybe communicated to me this night; so help me God.”

His words were slowly and solemnly spoken, and the repetition of them by the others was in a manner indicative of the sincerity and truth they both felt in the obligation taken.

“Good!” and Cobb laid the book upon the table.

“I might now go on and tell you of that for which I asked you to meet me here to-night, but there would be no use in communicating to you these secrets unless you agree to assist me. It is your help that I desire.”

“Cobb,” and Craft’s manner indicated that he felt hurt by his friend’s hesitation, “I have known you for quite a long time. I have admired and respected you, and if I can be of any assistance to you in any way, you have but to ask me.”

“Then, if I tell you that that which I ask of you can be performed without any neglect of the duties you owe to your God, your country, or yourself – that it will harm no one, nor will anyone have cause to complain of your action – will you swear it?”

“Yes!” they both exclaimed.

Again Cobb took the sacred volume from the mantel; again was the oath administered, and again was it taken freely and unreservedly.

“Gentlemen, I thank you,” and an expression of gratitude came into Cobb’s eyes. “Such friendship is worthy of you!”

After some ordinary conversation, he wheeled his chair nearer the others, and thus addressed them:

“For many years I have served this government honestly and well, but my salary has never seemed to me sufficient for the actual needs of a man in the position of an army officer. The government requires too much for the pay it gives. Again, a man is required to serve too many years in the lower grades; he is an old man by the time he is a captain. This is certainly contrary to the principles of a good and efficient government. As a captain, he should not be over thirty years of age, at the most. Here am I, who will be only a captain at fifty, if even then. This discourages the average young man. It keeps many from entering the service, because they say, ‘I can do better outside.’ I am ambitious, and desire to gain rank and wealth. But one thing I have found: *Life is too short*. I propose to lengthen it. You do not yet comprehend the import of my words. *I propose to enter life again a hundred years hence!* I know this statement startles you, but such is my intention. I propose to put myself in the condition in which you have seen that Maltese cat. I will sleep a hundred years. My arrangements are all made; my property, small though it is; is so fixed that it will not be lost to me in

that time. But I must hold my commission in the army – that is the hard problem. What do you think of my scheme?” and he put his hands behind him, and stood watching the effects of his proposition.

To say that his listeners were surprised, would ill interpret their feelings. They were dumbfounded. They could not believe that this man would dare to undergo the risk of death for the mere possibility of again living at a future day. He certainly was joking! He had asked them there to see if they would be such fools as to accept his remarks as given in earnest and good faith!

As soon as Craft could get his breath, he exclaimed, vehemently:

“You are certainly not going to subject yourself to such a test!”

Hathaway could not speak; he simply sat and looked at this man in amazement.

“Yes,” and Cobb laughed at the horrified expressions upon their faces. “Yes, I do most certainly intend this very thing. I have nothing to lose; I have everything to gain. My theories will be tested, my suppositions proved. I have invested all my wealth except a sufficient amount to carry out my programme, in such a manner that in a hundred years it must, or my calculations are very much out of the way, increase in a way to make me a rich man. If I can hold my rank in the army, I will be a colonel, probably. With wealth and rank, I can again enter the world in a position to gratify my ambitions and desires. If I succeed, all will be well; if I fail, why, that is the end of it. Without chick or soul in this world dependent upon me, why should I hesitate to advance the sciences by undergoing the ordeal of that which I have advocated? No one but I ought to be called upon to prove the theory I have originated. If I fail, what is the consequence? I simply die! On this earth, a human being dies every second; does it interfere with the steady and slow movement of the machinery of life? No, not at all! Though 32,000,000 die every year, they are not missed! Do we know what the future is? Do we know it to be worse than the present? No! Then, why care if we die to-day or to-morrow? I am resolved to take this opportunity of demonstrating that man can live longer than the allotted time accorded him. I have always longed to know what this world would be like in a hundred years: it certainly will be a strange world! Most men think that we have reached a state of perfection already, and that it is almost impossible for man to improve upon the present condition of life, surrounded, as we are, by so many and great inventions. I, for one, do not think that way. I believe we are but in our infancy to what we will be in a hundred years. You have each given me your sacred promise that you will assist me in my undertaking. I hold you to it. I am, in reality, going to die, as regards all my friends, all my associations, and as regards the very present itself. I think I can almost understand the feelings of the condemned criminal on the scaffold, who is about to leave behind him all that is dear, all that is sacred to him. Yet I am buoyed up by other feelings that that poor wretch has not; I will live again. I do not believe that either of you can quite understand my feelings in this matter. It is too new to you both. There are many cases on record where men have given up life for various reasons – given it up cheerfully and without a murmur; and those men never expected to live again – at least, in the flesh. Why should I falter? I, who go but to come again; to again enjoy the pleasures of life; to walk, see, speak, and associate with mankind!”

Cobb ceased speaking, and paced the floor in an excited manner. It was evident that this man, much as he talked of severing his connections with the present, was still loath to attempt this terrible ordeal. Yet, it was also apparent to both that he would not hesitate in his purpose. He was a man of too strong will; he would make the sacrifice.

His friends knew it and felt it.

Ceasing his walk, Cobb faced them and said:

“Before I leave, before I enter this dormant state, I must secure my position in the army beyond the possibility of losing it. How I am to do this, has long been a problem. If I am dead, I will be dropped from the rolls of the army; if I go on leave, I must return at the expiration of that leave, or, failing to do so, be declared a deserter. There seems to be but one way for me to accomplish my object. I will explain it.”

Cobb now entered his little room, and soon returned with a small sporting rifle and a paper box.

It was an ordinary thirty-calibre rifle, such as is used in sporting galleries.

Approaching his friends, he opened the box and showed them a row of small cartridges. They differed very little from those used in the ordinary rifle.

Handing one to Craft, he said:

“Do you notice anything peculiar about that cartridge?”

“Well,” and Craft examined it critically, turning it over and over, “it seems to be nothing but a solid thirty-calibre bullet. I cannot see that it is a cartridge at all,” and he handed it to Hathaway.

The latter examined it closely. It was, indeed, to all appearance, but an ordinary bullet with the base filled flush with some black substance; in length it was only seven-tenths of an inch; in calibre, thirty one-hundredths.

Taking one of them between his thumb and forefinger, Cobb twirled it about and said:

“This is one of my new cartridges for use in actual service. It seems to you, no doubt, very small, very inadequate to the needs of actual warfare. You would both naturally say that it is too small for long range, too small for executive work; that it is altogether unfit for the purposes for which bullets are made.” A smile played about his lips. Then, continuing, as he held up one of these bullets: “This is an ordinary thirty-calibre bullet, but the grand principle is in the explosive used with it. Heretofore it has required about fifty grains of powder to send such a missile on an effective mission. Now, fifty grains of powder require quite a good-sized space; it requires a case to hold it, and all this lengthens out the cartridge. If a magazine gun is used, but few such cartridges can be placed in the magazine. I have overcome all this by using a new explosive of my own manufacture. I take the ordinary bullet and simply fill the hollow end with one grain of my new compound, covering the whole with a fine and durable cement. All this saves space, and enables me to put about forty cartridges in my gun. Do you comprehend the drift of my remarks?”

Both of his listeners nodded assent.

Cobb loaded the gun with one of the ordinary cartridges, and then placed a bundle of common wrapping-paper on end at the other side of the room. Taking a position in the further corner, he discharged the piece at this improvised target.

The bullet entered the paper and penetrated through about forty sheets. Then, loading with one of his own cartridges, he again took the same position, and again discharged the piece.

Upon examination, it was found that over ninety-seven sheets of paper had been perforated. Cobb laid the gun on the table and said:

“You see the effect of the two cartridges! Which is the superior of the two? Of course, mine; and in effect as forty is to ninety-seven, or even more, perhaps. This is the power that will grant me my leave! This explosive is my own invention. You have seen its power. If we put gunpowder at one and that of gun-cotton at four, then that of meteorite, my new compound, would be nearly forty-six.

“Like gun-cotton, there is little or no smoke upon discharge, as you have witnessed; but, unlike gun-cotton or nitro-glycerine, the explosion is not instantaneous, but similar to that of gunpowder. Now, the amount of gas evolved upon the explosion of one grain of gunpowder is, in volume, about three hundred of carbonic acid and nitrogen, but the true volume, considering the heat, is about fifteen hundred times that of the original charge. Meteorite has a rate of combustion three times slower than gunpowder, while the volume of gas liberated is more than sixty-six times that of the latter, or about one hundred thousand times its original bulk. This is the power, as I have said, that gives me my leave of absence. On the 22d of last month I sent an application to the War Department for a leave for the purpose of perfecting a gun in which to use these cartridges. With the application I sent some of the cartridges. I also sent a sealed packet containing the formula for making the explosive, but with the positive directions that the formula should not be made known until I had perfected my experiments. I asked for leave until I had completed my work. Through the little influence I possessed, I pressed this application to be granted in the manner I asked. Yesterday I received my leave, and here it is;” and he handed Craft the following paper:

“WAR DEPARTMENT, A.-G. O., }
WASHINGTON, November 9, 1887. }

“Special Orders,
No. 156.

[Extract.]

“5. Leave of absence is hereby granted First Lieutenant Junius Cobb, Second Cavalry, from December 1, 1887, until surrendered by him in writing, or upon his return to duty, for purposes which he has communicated to this department.

“By command of Lieut. – Gen. Sheridan.

“*R. C. Drum,*
“*Adjutant-General.*”

“I had this leave,” said Cobb, as he took it from Craft, after the latter had read it, “while I was talking to you last night, but I preferred not to show it to you until this evening. Any time after the first of next month I can leave the service and return when I wish, and my commission will be secured to me.”

Craft and Hathaway both told him that though they thought his undertaking was a very foolish one, nevertheless they would give him all the assistance in their power, as they had promised.

Cobb and his friends talked a little longer on various things to be done, and finally separated for the night; the two latter going home to wonder over this great scheme of their friend, the former seating himself in his easy-chair to deliberate upon the thousand and one incidentals necessary to carry it out.

CHAPTER III

In order to carry into effect this great and ambitious idea, Cobb had commenced operations as early as July.

He knew that he must find some place in which to lay his body, that would be perfectly safe from any possible disturbance. It would not do to select any house, or any particular piece of ground, nor could he go to any island or distant part of the globe.

A hundred years would make such changes that it was impossible to foretell what places would not be disturbed in that time. It was a most difficult problem to solve.

Was there a place on earth that he was sure would not be reached by human hands, and its contents and secrets made known, in a hundred years!

It was imperative that he should find such a place, and with all the assurance that one has in life of anything, that it would remain unmolested. What would not happen in a hundred years! Were he to take the most unfrequented and out-of-the-way place he could conceive of, it might be the very place of all others that would be the first to be explored by some enterprising genius in the future.

Cobb knew this, and realized the necessity of selecting such a spot as would give the utmost assurance that no one would desire to destroy, enter, or molest it in any way.

After many hours of reflection upon the subject, he at last decided upon what he considered to be the best place possible to select – the place that would, in all probability, remain in its primitive state for the period desired.

There was being built upon Mount Olympus, some three miles from the city of San Francisco, by a Mr. Sutro, a generous gentleman of that city, a reduced copy of the statue of “Liberty Enlightening the World,” then in position on Bedloe’s Island, New York harbor.

This statue was to be about thirty feet in height, resting upon a pedestal some forty by thirty feet in area, and twenty-five feet high.

Cobb conceived the idea that such a piece of work would, in all likelihood, remain undisturbed by any and every person for the period necessary for his long sleep. No sooner had this belief taken possession of him than he at once took measures to communicate with the gentleman who had charge of its construction.

A Mr. Bennett was the supervising architect, and this gentleman was easily induced, for a consideration, to undertake the construction of a small chamber within the base of the pedestal. He also agreed that the chamber should be reached through the side by a hinged block of marble fitting perfectly, but movable with ease from the inside, and that the purpose for which it was constructed should never be made known by him.

Mr. Bennett was not aware of Cobb’s true intentions regarding the chamber; it was simply a contract between them that such a piece of work should be performed. Bennett was a man of his word, and was well known to Cobb, who placed the utmost confidence in him; yet, to make it still more binding, he placed him under a sacred oath not to enter the chamber after it was built, or communicate his knowledge of its existence to any living soul, nor to leave any information of it at his death.

While the pedestal was being built, Bennett had one of the largest marble slabs taken out, at night, by workmen brought there blindfolded, and replaced upon hinges, so it would easily open and shut by the pressure of a finger on a concealed spring.

This part of the work having been accomplished, it was very easy to carry out the remainder.

The pedestal being finished and solid, he took workmen there every night, blindfolded, and opening the slab door, cut out the masonry, hauling away the material as fast as it was taken out. Cobb desired that the chamber should be as deep as possible below the center of the pedestal, for security; Bennett made it so by digging down, after entering the base, and lining the sides with heavy brick-work.

The interior of the chamber, after construction, was fourteen by eighteen feet, and in height nine feet and six inches. The floor was made very smooth by a liberal use of Portland cement. The door was so constructed that after an inside catch had been set, it would lock itself upon being closed, and no amount of skill could open it without breaking the marble slab. There was no inlet for light, nor was there any entrance or exit for air.

Such was the finished condition of the chamber, as turned over by Mr. Bennett to Cobb, on the 15th of November, 1887.

Cobb had not been negligent in the meantime, but had gotten many of the necessary things into shape which he knew would be required, for his chamber was to have a great many and a great variety of instruments, all of which would be absolutely necessary to insure success.

Nothing could be done before the 24th of November, for on that day the Statue of Liberty was to be unveiled and turned over to the city of San Francisco by Mr. Sutro.

At last the 24th arrived, and the ceremonies of dedication were over.

As the last citizen left the vicinity of the statue a man came up the hill to view the surroundings. That man was Junius Cobb.

He approached the pedestal and looked carefully over its sides. Yes, it was all right; no one had had an inkling of the secret entrance, or a thought that it was to be used for anything save that for which it had been erected.

Satisfied with his inspection, he passed down the hill, and took the Haight-street cars to the city, leaving them at the corner of Market and Montgomery. With rapid strides he quickly passed down that street to the Occidental Hotel.

Near the entrance of that noted army resort, whipping his legs with a small cane in a most impatient manner, stood Hathaway, as if awaiting the arrival of some expected person.

Cobb at once walked up to him and cried:

“Hello! Hathaway; on time, I see; but where is Craft?”

“Playing billiards in the other room – at least he was there a minute ago; but do you want us to-night?” inquiringly.

“Of course! did I not ask you to meet me here?”

“Yes, I know; but are you going to work so soon? What is the use of doing anything to-night? You know I have a partial engagement for this evening, and would like to keep it;” and Hathaway looked beseechingly toward his companion.

“To me this is business, and I cannot postpone it; if your social duties are so pressing, why, I will have to excuse you.”

Cobb showed the displeasure he felt at the apparent want of interest displayed by the other in what to him was the greatest undertaking a man could engage in.

“Oh, no,” quickly replied Hathaway, noticing the effect of his words upon Cobb; “you do not understand me. I am ready now and at all times to give you my earnest assistance. What shall I do?”

“Go and find Craft, and meet me here in ten minutes;” and Cobb turned on his heel, and passed down the street. Proceeding a few blocks, he hailed the driver of a passing express wagon, who pulled up his team at the curb-stone near where Cobb was standing.

“Are you engaged?” quickly asked Cobb.

“No,” the man replied.

“Do you wish to earn twenty dollars?”

“Do I? try me!” The man’s face gave evidence of his sincerity.

“Will you work all night for that amount?”

“Yes, sir.”

“And go wherever I wish?”

“Yes; so I get back by morning.”

“And will you permit me to take your team, after you have gone a certain distance, and drive the remainder of the way, you to remain with one of my men until I return?”

“Well, as to that, is it not a little peculiar to ask a man to let his team be driven off by unknown parties without a guarantee that it will be returned?” and the expression of his countenance indicated that he was in a quandary, for he did not like to lose the twenty dollars, nor did he like the idea of letting his team be driven away by strangers.

“You need have no fear as to that; your team will be returned; but, to satisfy you, I will leave two hundred dollars with you as security until I return it.”

“That alters the case,” said the man. “I am with you.”

“Then, be at the corner of California street in ten minutes;” and Cobb turned and walked back to the Occidental.

Craft and Hathaway were awaiting him at the door of the hotel, the former puffing away at a cigar which the kindness of some friend had furnished.

“Ah, here you are, both of you. Good! And now to business.”

Cobb seemed as if he was in a hurry to get to work, yet he showed no signs of excitement.

They passed up Bush street to the works of the electrical supply company, where, entering the place, Cobb asked if the stores and apparatus which he had ordered had been packed and were ready for shipment.

Receiving an affirmative reply, he told his friends to await him there, and quickly descended the stairs. Proceeding to the corner of California street, he met the expressman whom he had engaged; mounting the driver's seat, he directed him up Bush street, and stopped the team where he had left his friends. Giving the man orders to wait for him, he again ascended the stairs. The work of removing the boxes was at once commenced.

First, there was a long box, looking much like a coffin, being some eight feet by three, and over eighteen inches in depth. This was carefully taken down-stairs and placed in the wagon; then followed five boxes of various shapes and weights.

All things being safely placed in the wagon, Cobb mounted to the seat, telling Craft and Hathaway to get in and sit upon the boxes, as there was no room for them in front. Then, turning to the driver, he said:

“Drive up into Kearney, and thence into Market toward the park; take Haight street at the junction.”

Away rattled the wagon, passing through the crowded streets and by the flashing windows filled with all the holiday goods, ready for the Christmas season.

The night was quite dark; a slight drizzling rain which was falling, was very favorable to the scheme which Cobb and his friends had on hand. Passing up Haight street to within about half a mile of Mt. Olympus, Cobb ordered the driver to pull up his team. He then directed Hathaway to remain with the driver while he and Craft took the outfit to its destination.

The place where they had stopped was a side street, close to and off of Haight street, and it was impossible for the driver, as much as he strained his eyes, to determine his surroundings.

Cobb handed the expressman ten twenty-dollar gold pieces, with the understanding that they were to be returned when he brought back the team.

Leaving Hathaway with positive orders not to permit the driver to leave that particular spot until their return, Cobb mounted the seat again, Craft sitting beside him.

Turning once more into Haight street, for the purpose of throwing the driver off of their true course, they proceeded down that street for a couple of blocks, and turned sharp to the right, and drove quickly toward Mt. Olympus.

Not a soul was in sight, and the many wagon-tracks made by the artillery and carriages, which had attended the unveiling of the statue, would conceal all indication that another carriage had gone up to the pedestal that evening.

Driving close to the side of the base, Cobb pulled up, and both dismounted from the wagon.

The secret spring of the door was quickly touched, and the heavy marble slab swung upon its hinges; then, with all dispatch, the boxes were unloaded and carried into the interior of the chamber. The large box required all the strength of the two men, but it was finally gotten inside. This being finished, Craft took the reins, and quickly drove the team back to where Hathaway was impatiently awaiting him.

The money was returned by the driver, who then hurriedly departed for the city.

Seeing the man well out of sight, Craft and Hathaway carefully made their way back to the statue, and were soon inside of the pedestal. The slab door was then nearly closed, leaving but a slight aperture for the entrance of air, the opening covered by boxes, to prevent the rays of their lights being seen by any chance visitors to that neighborhood.

During their absence, Cobb had taken out two lanterns from one of the boxes, and now a bright light made everything quite clear within the chamber.

“Now,” said Cobb to Hathaway, “take that hatchet and open all of the boxes.”

The lids were quickly torn off and thrown to one side.

The contents of these boxes needed careful inspection. The large one was first emptied. The sides of this box were wrenched off, disclosing a large glass case, seven feet six inches by two feet eight inches, and sixteen inches in height. This glass coffin – for such, indeed, it resembled – was carefully taken out and set upon the floor. Then followed, from the same box, an ordinary set of single bed-springs, or woven-wire mattress, such as are used on single beds. Cobb then took from one of the smaller boxes a pair of iron horses or trestles, and placed them in one corner of the room, with their legs firmly fixed into the cemented floor. Carefully lifting the glass case, he and Craft set it upon the trestles, leaving a space of about thirty inches between it and the floor. Next they hinged the wire mattress to the trestles, so that there were full twenty inches between it and the bottom of the glass case. From the next box unpacked were taken seventy-five cells of Grenet battery. These cells were of peculiar construction, and differed from the regular style in that the zincs were drawn up and held clear of the electro-poison fluid by slight fastenings, which terminated in glass bulbs blown in the tops. Cobb had selected this battery on account of its great strength, and for the reason that it would remain inactive for an indefinite time, provided the zincs were kept out of the fluid. Placing an iron stand near the head of the case, he and Hathaway arranged the jars upon it, and connected the various cells for intensity.

The wires were then run through small holes in the top glass of the large case, being insulated with a special covering that would withstand age without deteriorating.

The next thing was to set in position, over the row of battery cells, an iron beam, with a fall of about four inches, the fall terminating in two sockets. This beam was held over and in position by a pulley, over which ran a wire rope composed of aluminum strands, and having attached to it a fifty-pound weight. Connected to the two poles of the battery were insulated wires, terminating in flat discs of copper.

These wires were about thirty feet long, and passed through the holes in the top of the glass case, the copper discs being inside.

From another box were taken two bottles of fine old French brandy, two bottles of whisky, a small bottle of Valentine’s beef juice, and several cans of preserved meats, which had been prepared by Cobb, and the cans made of aluminum for the purpose. An alcohol heater was also taken out and set up in such a manner that a glass reservoir could, upon being turned on, feed it with alcohol. Through this heater ran wires joined to a platinum strip and connected with twenty cells of the battery. A cup and saucer, knife, fork, can-opener, spoon, and a couple of stew-pans, were next taken out and laid by the heater.

All these things having been put in order, Cobb, with the assistance of Hathaway, carefully lifted from a large box a heavy glass case, two feet nine inches high by three feet square. This case was set in the further corner of the chamber.

Through a door in the top, which Cobb opened, both Craft and Hathaway saw a number of wheel and pinion works, while at the bottom of the case was a circular piece of bright aluminum divided into equal divisions. The center of the ring was sunk into the glass bottom half an inch, and on one side of the ring was a number of small wheels and rods; the whole presenting the aspect of very fine and delicate mechanism.

Cobb now took out of the last box a large and very elegant compass, two feet in diameter and with a heavy needle; this he placed in the sunken center of the glass case.

Craft noticed that there was no iron or steel in the works in this box; nothing but aluminum, save the needle itself.

Through the sides of the case, Cobb adjusted an aluminum rod connecting with the pulley and weight attached to the beam over the batteries.

By this time the needle in the compass had settled and the positive pole pointed to 283 on the aluminum scale.

Both Craft and Hathaway had asked but few questions during all this work, curbing their curiosity until such time as their companion would enlighten them as to the meaning of all this apparatus. They had been on the point, a number of times, of asking for some information, but the other had, by a look, quickly given them to understand that he was not yet ready to explain things. But it was impossible for Craft to hold in any longer; he had to ask the use of this last glass case, with its many wheels and delicate machinery.

“Wait! You will understand it all soon,” answered Cobb. “There is little more to do to-night.” Then, taking a paper from his pocket, he scanned it for fully five minutes, making a few notes upon it with his pencil during the time.

At last, seeming satisfied, he bent over the compass in the box, and by a small screw in its side turned the whole delicately adjusted works around until a fine pointer, from which projected a tiny hook, became flush with the figures 260 from the zero of the scale, or to a reading of 4 degrees 20 minutes; then turning the whole compass-box around, he carefully adjusted it so that the needle should point exactly to the figures 993, equivalent to a reading of 16 degrees 33 minutes, the magnetic variation east, of San Francisco, California, in December, 1887.

It was easy to see that the little hook which hung down from the overlapping works would become engaged with the needle of the compass if the latter were to retrograde in arc 12 degrees 13 minutes.

Unscrewing a cap on the top of the case, he applied a small air-pump, which he had taken out of the box, to the opening, and screwed it firmly on; then, closing the glass door, he placed cement along the junction of the door and sides, from a bottle which he had brought for that purpose. In a few moments, the cement had set, and then, working the air-pump, he soon exhausted the air from the case; finally unscrewing the pump, he replaced the cap and laid the pump in the corner of the chamber.

All this being finished to his satisfaction, he announced that the work for the night was completed.

Looking at his watch, Cobb said:

“It is now four o’clock in the morning, and time that we should get out of this if we don’t wish to be seen departing. We have done all that it is possible to do for the present; let us at once start for town; besides, you have to be at the post by six o’clock.”

“Yes, that is true,” returned Hathaway; “we are due at that hour. We have done a good deal of work, but for the life of me, I am totally ignorant of the purposes of all this apparatus. I would

like to have you explain some of it to me,” and his eyes turned inquiringly toward the large case with its wheels and compass.

“All in good time!” and Cobb cautiously opened the swinging panel.

The coast was clear; not a single person was in sight.

“Now, then, be lively!” and he stepped out, the others following quickly. In another moment the door was closed, and not a sign was left to indicate that the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty held within its interior the apparatus necessary for prolonging the life of a human being.

The three friends passed down the hill, and took the Haight-street cars for the city. It was the first car for the day, and not another passenger was on board.

Arriving at the Occidental, Cobb said:

“You are expected to be at reveille this morning, but I have no duties until retreat. There are a few things that I wish to attend to; so I will leave you here. Be sure to be at my quarters at 9:30 to-night. Good-bye!” and he left them without waiting for a reply.

It was nearly eight o’clock, and after a hearty breakfast, when Cobb left the hotel, passed down Montgomery street into Washington, and made his way to a small-sized house at the foot of an alley leading from that thoroughfare.

The windows of the house were all closed by shutters, and the whole building bore an aspect of dilapidation.

Ascending the four rickety steps that led to the door, he gave a sharp knock, repeating it after a moment, as no answer was obtained.

“Who knocks?”

“It is I, Colchis! Open the door.”

The door swung open, and Cobb entered, the door closing behind him with a bang.

CHAPTER IV

It is necessary to go back a few months in our story, and introduce a new character, the inhabitant of the little old, dilapidated house in the lane.

On the evening of December 10, 1886, as Cobb was coming out of the Cosmos, a favorite club of the young gentlemen of San Francisco, he had run into an old and crippled man who was passing down the street. Cobb was in a hurry as he emerged from the place, and did not notice the poor pedestrian in time to avoid a collision. The consequences were that the old man was knocked to the ground, and appeared to be badly hurt. Cobb at once stopped and lifted the man up to ascertain the extent of his injuries, and finding him still insensible, had called a hack to convey him to the nearest druggist.

The man was about sixty years of age, his right leg partially paralyzed, the sight of his right eye gone, and deep scars upon his face and neck. His clothes were shabby and much worn, yet there were indications that the man had seen better days.

That portion of his face which was not scarred and seamed, gave evidence of quickness and perception, and a general appearance of knowledge and former refinement was plainly noticeable. His hands, too, were not those of a man accustomed to hard work.

This man was Jean Colchis, a native of France, but a refugee from that country. He had, in his time, been a great chemist; he had been noted, far and near, as a man greatly gifted in the sciences, and one who had given much to his native country in the way of scientific invention; but, at a later day in his life, he had been led away by the persuasion of others to engage in a plot against the ruling power of his land. This plot being discovered, he was sentenced to death, but, escaping, had taken refuge in the United States.

He was the recipient of a small pension from the members of his family who had not joined in the conspiracy, and upon this small pension Jean Colchis lived in the humble and rickety house in Duke's Lane.

The pension was sufficient for all the needs of the old man and his only daughter, a lovely girl of seventeen years; it gave them their daily sustenance and life, and a slight margin from which to purchase the few things he needed to continue the one hobby of his life, chemical analysis.

When Cobb had taken the old man to the druggist's, an examination had shown that nothing but a slight contusion of the side of the head had resulted from the unexpected knock-down he had received. He soon regained his senses, but was in a weak and helpless condition.

Learning from him the place of his abode, Cobb at once took him there in a hack, and carefully attended him during the remainder of that evening.

Such was the introduction of Junius Cobb to Jean Colchis.

Cobb's kindness to the old Frenchman was rewarded by an invitation to call again, and as he descended the stairs of the old, rain-beaten house, he resolved to come the next evening.

He did come, and many evenings after, and it was from this old man that Cobb first learned the art of making ozone in quantities. It was not a difficult matter for them to ascertain the various hobbies each possessed. Their conversation soon gave each an insight into the desires of the other for a knowledge of the many things yet unknown, but yet imagined. Their desires being so assimilated, their tendencies so coincident, it was only natural that each should take more than a common liking to the other.

But, though he had worked with Colchis in the manufacture and uses of ozone, the latter never had any idea of the grand scheme his friend had in view, for Cobb would not communicate the secret to him for fear that he might divulge it to others.

The door of the old house had opened to admit Cobb, and had closed again, leaving him in the hall. There was no light to guide him, but his knowledge of the place and surroundings was such that he found no difficulty in ascending to the little back parlor where Colchis usually sat when not at work.

Opening the door, he entered, and was quickly clasped about the neck by a pair of plump white arms, while a face, radiantly beautiful, looked into his, and a red pouting mouth invited the kiss which he quickly bestowed upon it.

“Oh, Mr. Cobb, I am so glad you have come! I heard you at the door, and have surprised you! Now, have I not? Say yes; for you know I have!” and the sweet little maiden released him, and shook her delicate finger in a menacing gesture, as if her command could not be disobeyed.

Marie Colchis was the only child of Jean Colchis – a beautiful, fair-skinned girl of seventeen, with long, heavy blonde hair; plump in form, with small, fine hands; loving in disposition, with most winsome ways; innocent as a new-born babe.

Jean Colchis had kept this sweet girl close to him with a jealous care. She knew no one, scarcely, save her father and Junius Cobb. Witty and bright beyond her years, yet gentle and innocent as a lamb, she had from the very first conceived a girlish love for her father’s visitor. And Junius Cobb loved the girl dearly; loved to hear her girlish talk and watch her innocent ways; loved to stroke her hair, and loved to kiss her lips and feel her arms about him. Was there any harm? He was thirty-three, and she was but seventeen.

Jean Colchis noted their peculiar love, and smiled. No man was closer to the heart of Jean Colchis than Junius Cobb. Nothing could the latter ask that the old man in Duke’s Lane would not have given him – even his daughter, should he seek her. But this, of course, the old man knew was beyond expectation. It would have pleased his old heart, but the disparity of years caused him to believe it to be impossible.

And Marie – what were her thoughts and feelings?

She loved Junius Cobb – loved him, young as she was, as a mature woman loves the man she would call husband. She loved him with her whole heart, with her very soul.

Cobb knew this, and reproached himself many times for causing her affectionate heart to entertain the hope that she would sometime be his wife.

It had come by degrees, unseen by either, until each had felt that the brightness of the world was centered in the other. He could not marry her; this he knew, for she was too young. He could not wait until she had bloomed into the magnificent woman that he knew nature had destined her to become, for he would then be dead to the world. He could not tell her the truth! He did what thousands of others have done – he temporized.

“Marie,” and he took both of her hands in his, and looked long and lovingly into her eyes; “Marie, you are not a child, you are a woman. You are far beyond your years. What I tell you tonight will cause you pain, but it must be said.”

“O, Mr. Cobb!” she cried, and the tears flooded her eyes; “are you going to tell me that I am no longer your little Marie! that an – an – another is going to take you away from your little girl?” and she buried her head in his hands and cried piteously.

“No, Marie, not that!” he quickly returned. “But I am going to leave you; am going far away; I may never return!”

“And you will meet other and beautiful women, and will forget your Marie!” she said, still sobbing.

“No! darling little Marie! Will it give you pleasure if I tell you that I swear to be true to you – to wait until you have grown to womanhood? that I will marry no other woman living but you?” and he stroked her beautiful hair and raised her face to his.

“If you swear this, you do love me!” she cried through her tears; then, brightening up, she threw her arms about him, and murmured: “Though it will grieve me to the heart to see you leave me, yet your promise will ever tend to dull the sorrow of your absence, and will be a beacon light for me

to look forward to. A few years, and you will come and claim me, will you not, Junius?" and as the words left her lips, she blushed and dropped her eyes from before his gaze.

Somehow, she had never before used his first name. It seemed to her that he was too far above her, too much older, for such a liberty on her part.

And how had their love ripened, these two of years so wide apart? Simply and easily enough. In one of his loving moods, Junius Cobb, in kissing her good-night, had said:

"Marie, I will wait until you grow up, and marry you!"

"Will you?" she had replied, laughing, yet earnestly. "Then, I accept you, Mr. Cobb, and will grow just as fast as I can."

Very simple, and very easy.

"Marie, little darling," and Cobb's voice was sad and low, "to-night I go far away. To-night we must part; but my sacred promise I give you, my girl darling, that when I return, you shall be my wife, *if living*."

He knew his deception, but it was better, he thought, to let her live without the knowledge of the utter impossibility of the fulfillment of her hopes, than to tell her the truth, and break her heart. She would outgrow her girlish love, he argued, and time would soften, if not deaden, the sorrow of his continued absence.

For a half-hour they talked, they loved, this man of thirty-three and the girl of seventeen.

Who can fathom the mysteries of love!

Leaving her in sorrow at his coming departure, but hopeful for the future, he moved toward the workshop of Colchis, while a choking sensation surrounded his heart, and tears filled his eyes.

Turning the knob of the last door at the end of the hall, Cobb entered, and found his friend moving toward him.

The room was lighted by four Edison incandescent lamps, one in each corner, besides an arc light directly over a large and peculiar machine from which sparks were incessantly being emitted.

Like all true workers in electricity, Colchis' apartments were a net-work of wires, while the various parts of the house were connected, in one way or another, for quick communication. The answer to the summons which Cobb had made at the door was given by a speaking-tube, while the door itself opened and closed by magnets; thus Colchis was enabled to remain in his room while answering the calls at his door made by the few who had occasion to visit him.

"Ah, Junius, my boy, welcome to the shop!" and the old man grasped the latter's hand. "I was expecting you this morning, sure; for it is now over forty-eight hours since you were here. What has kept you away?"

"Duty, master; duty." Cobb had early used the term master, in token of the ability of his old but generous friend.

"I was engaged the past two nights, and it was impossible for me to get here; but how progresses the work? Are you making a good showing, for you know the time is drawing near when I shall want the full amount."

"Yes; there are nearly eight pounds ready for you when you desire to take them."

"Good! It is close to the amount, I must say; and the batteries are still at it, I see."

"Will you take a look at the work of the day?"

"Yes; but yet, master, you know that I do not pretend to pass upon your work. I am too well satisfied that it is being well done."

They moved toward the sparkling and crackling instrument near the further corner of the room.

In reality, it was not what would be called an instrument, but a veritable manufacturing machine, turning out its products, small though they were, in the most perfect manner, and ceasing in its work but for a brief time during the whole twenty-four hours. This was the decomposing machine which Colchis and Cobb had devised and made for the concentrating of the ozone in the air. It was a rude affair, in one sense of the word, for neither of them had had any experience in making such machinery

before; yet it was marvelous in other respects, for it accurately performed the duty for which it had been constructed. Standing upon four legs, was a glass case, about sixteen inches square by twenty deep, in the upper portion of which was a separate compartment with a glass bottom, having a hole some eight inches square through its center; on each side of this hole, with the points about one-sixteenth of an inch apart, were ten platinum wires, while the opening in the top terminated in a common stove-pipe, which was run into the chimney. Entering at the bottom of the case was a two-inch pipe, connected with a large double-cylinder air-pump, which in turn was coupled to a pony motor worked by storage batteries.

Along the other side of the room were twenty-four cases, each containing four accumulators of under .005-ohm internal resistance. These batteries were, individually, capable of developing 350 ampere hours of work, and each cell had an electromotive force of eight volts. A part of this battery was attached to the platinum points in the inside of the case, while the remainder was used to work the pump, feed the lamps in the house, etc.

The pump was an ordinary compressor of two cylinders, each cylinder having a capacity of 1,000 cubic inches. The total power exerted was 3,000 pounds every six-tenths of a second, or about thirteen actual horse power.

The air being received into the cylinder, was forced into the glass case through the pipe in the bottom, and under a pressure of two atmospheres; thus delivering, every three minutes, 200,000 cubic inches of air. The air, in rising, passed through the aperture above and out through the pipe, which was provided with a valve opening at a pressure of thirty-five pounds per square inch. Between the platinum points, by means of an automatic break, were continually being sent a series of electric sparks, causing the air to be deprived of its ozone, which fell in vapor to the bottom of the glass case, and there formed into crystals of various sizes.

The machinery which Colchis and Cobb had erected was not perfect by any means, and the consequence was that they could not save all of the ozone in any given quantity of air. They did the best they could, saving about fifty per cent.

The air-pumps were capable of driving through the reduction chamber over 80,000,000 cubic inches, or 4,000 pounds of air in every twenty hours; but this vast amount yielded only 400 grains of ozone. The expenditure of force for the result obtained was enormous; but there was no other method for them to get the amount of ozone required, except with greater power and cost.

Early in July, Cobb had gained the assistance of Colchis to manufacture these crystals, and had put in the reducer, pumps, and motor immediately after.

Every evening at six o'clock, and every morning at five, a team drove up to Colchis' back gate, delivering new storage batteries and taking away the old ones.

Day after day, from seven in the morning until five in the afternoon, and from seven in the afternoon until five in the morning, since the 5th of August, the manufacture had been going on; making one hundred and twelve days' work up to the morning in question – November 25, 1887.

“Master, this is the 25th of August, is it not?”

“Yes, Junius.”

“And you say the quantity that I asked for is nearly ready?”

“Nearly. At five o'clock to-morrow morning I will have 45,000 grains.”

“Good! That is the amount, exactly.”

“But at first you desired only seven pounds; I would have had that some time ago.”

“Yes, master; but I did not care to have you stop at the exact amount; circumstances might cause me to wish for more, at the last moment.”

“It has been incessant work for the machines, I can assure you; but they have done splendidly;” and Colchis laid his hand lovingly upon the reducer, near which he was standing.

“Colchis, how can I ever repay you for the time you have given to the manufacture of these crystals?” and Cobb took up a glass bottle with a sealed top containing a pound of ozone, the result of over two weeks’ constant work.

“Say nothing about pay, my dear boy; it has cost you enough already, I fear; for the continual recharging of all these accumulators must take no small sum.”

“True; it has taken quite a little fortune, to me at least, to obtain these eight pounds of ozone; but I hope the money has been well expended.”

“Junius,” and Colchis laid his hand upon the other’s shoulder, “you have never told me what you are going to do with all this ozone. Is there a secret about it? If there is, my boy, you need not say a word; perhaps I ought not to ask you, but leave you to tell me, or not, as you wish.”

“Colchis, my dear old friend, I ought to be more confiding, and tell you why I sought your assistance, why I have used your time, why I have taken your knowledge and used it to my own advantage; but it is impossible to make you acquainted with this one great object. Ask no more, I pray you!” and he turned away as if he had refused that which the other was justly entitled to request.

Putting his arm about Cobb’s neck, Colchis looked him in the eyes with a kind and loving expression:

“Say no more; make no excuses; I surely would not pry into your secrets. We all have undertakings, we all have periods of our lives concerning which we do not care to communicate to the world. Your secrets are yours, Junius; I do not feel hurt in the least that you enlighten me not upon them.”

“But I know your curiosity has been aroused, and you naturally have wondered why I have wanted all this ozone, especially when it has taken such an expenditure of money and time to procure it.”

“Yes, it has; but it is gone now. I no longer have any curiosity on the subject. To-morrow morning I will have the full amount that you have requested, 45,000 grains.”

“How much have I had already?”

“In August, a year ago, you had about ninety grains, and in the following October, a little over 1,500 more.”

“Yes; that was for the experiment with the cat.” He had spoken without thinking.

Colchis looked up, surprised; a curious expression came over his face, but he said nothing.

“Yes,” he continued, “I remember now. There were about 1,600 grains made by the old process. Had we been compelled to follow that method, we would never have completed our task.”

“True, my boy! It was a lucky day for you, I have no doubt, when we hit upon the idea we have since employed.”

“Come,” said Cobb, “let us sit down. I have a little more to speak of ere we part for the night.”

They passed through the door into a smaller but neater room.

The furniture was plain and scarce, but the fire in the grate gave the room an agreeable appearance. Colchis touched a button, and instantly a bright light shone out from a pair of Edison lamps; then, handing Cobb a glass and bottle, taken from a pile of books and papers on the table, he said:

“Brighten up, Junius, with some of this old cognac; it is good, I can assure you, for we Frenchmen know what is good brandy. Had I a cigar, I would offer you one; but I do not smoke, so you will have to provide yourself with that article, if you smoke at all. Now, sit down,” as Cobb finished his glass of brandy, “and tell me what it is that appears to worry you. Why are you so sad to-night?”

“There is not much to tell, master, except that this will be my last night to pass with you, my dear old friend; I am going on a long and dangerous journey, one from which I will never return – that is, to my friends now living. I go not to escape the consequences of any crime or wrong-doing, but to gratify my ambition alone. It would give me much pleasure, much happiness, could I but take with me such a dear friend as you have been; but it cannot be. Do not look startled, dear Colchis; I am

not going to commit suicide; and yet, again, I am – suicide as regards all present, but not as regards the future. I will say no more, nor must you ask me any questions. For your kindness, I have only thanks to offer, unless you will confer a favor upon me by taking this check for \$2,000 as a partial recompense for your labors in my behalf,” and he laid the check upon the table.

Colchis arose from his chair, seized the check, and tore it into a hundred pieces; his eyes looked deep into those of his young friend, and then the tears came, and the old man sunk back into his chair. The friendship which had been so romantically begun between these two men was then, by Cobb, to be ended, and the sore healed by a money consideration!

“Junius, I did not believe that you would insult me in this manner! Our friendship has been one of the brightest spots in my life. Let it end if it must, but let it end with the feeling that each has aided the other to the best of his ability, and without hope of other recompense than the knowledge that the assistance was spontaneously and willingly given. You are about to embark in some new and great enterprise; of that I feel assured, yet I do not ask its import. If you must leave the old man, never again to see him – if you must sever the friendship that has been a Godsend to the refugee from his native land – so be it; I can say no word against it, believing you would not do it were it possible to do otherwise. Let us say no more upon the subject. At six o’clock to-morrow morning send to me, and I will have the ozone ready to be delivered to your man. There will be eight pounds of it, in as many bottles.”

“Then, there is nothing more for me to do but to take your hand, dear, kind old master, and bid you a lasting but sorrowful farewell. May a good God watch over you, Colchis, is the last wish of your friend and pupil. Good-bye!” and, saying this, Cobb pressed the old cripple to his heart.

“Good-bye! my darling boy,” sobbed the old man. “But, Junius, does Marie know this? The child loves you. She talks of you continually. Does she know you are going away forever?” and he put both hands on the shoulders of the young man and looked him in the eyes.

“Ah! master, master! Like a coward, like a cur, am I running away! I have seen her! I have lied to her! lied, I tell you; lied to her! and because I had not strength to tell the truth!” He buried his face in his hands, and sobbed like a child.

“My son, cry not at what I am convinced you did for the best interests of that dear girl. My faith in you is not shaken. Let God alone judge our motives; mankind can do it not!”

“O master! I cannot leave you in this manner! To leave you now with the simple knowledge that I will never return, would be to provoke all manner of thoughts detrimental to my honesty and sincerity of character. You shall know all! I will confide in you my secret!”

Then by the side of this grand old man, Cobb sat and told him of his great undertaking, and of his love for his daughter.

Half an hour after, the door opened, and Colchis, with a face grave and sad, called to his daughter Marie.

Entering the room, she looked from one to the other, as if seeking some explanation of the quiet, sad expression of each.

Junius Cobb bowed his head, and the hot tears fell upon his hands. Colchis turned his face away.

Quickly going to her lover, Marie knelt at his feet, and gently raised his head until their eyes met.

“Do not cry, Junius; do not cry. I know you cannot help yourself. Duty calls you away, and you must go. Such, you have told me, is a soldier’s fortune.”

He clasped her to his heart.

“Marie,” gravely and sadly spoke her father, “he leaves us to-night. When he returns, no man can tell. But let this comfort you: he has asked for your hand; your heart, I know, is his already. I have given my consent, and gladly. Let him go to his duty cheerfully, and await his return. If you are constant in the love you profess as a girl, you shall marry Junius Cobb, or no other. I swear it, as I hope for salvation hereafter,” and he raised his hand toward Heaven in token of his oath.

Cobb raised his eyes inquiringly to those of his friend.

What did he mean by those words? Was he, too, imposing upon the girl's innocence? A strange light, a gleam of hope, of inspiration, shone in the eyes of Jean Colchis as he once more bade Cobb good-bye, and left the room.

Marie and Cobb were alone – alone for the last time: she, hopeful for the future; he, broken-hearted from a knowledge of what that future was to be.

“Junius, my own,” she murmured, “go, and do your duty. God be with you, as will always my prayers. But go with this knowledge: that I swear by the God my mother taught me to adore, that I will wait till you come to me, will be true to you forever; will marry none on earth but you.”

How beautiful, heavenly beautiful, was this girl, standing there under the electric light.

None can tell the passions that moved that man's heart.

Would he give up his great undertaking, and live and marry this Hebe, this angel? Too late! too late! The die was cast; he must meet his destiny!

With an aching heart, he kissed her good-bye – kissed her good-bye, and forever.

Into the chilly morning air he went, but there was no chill like the chill at his heart. Turning once toward the old house, he cried in his anguish:

“God watch over you and take you, for you are lost to me forever!”

CHAPTER V

It was the night of December 1st, and torrents of rain poured down, flooding the streets of the city and the grounds of the Presidio.

Seven had just struck from the little, old-fashioned clock on Cobb's mantel.

But few changes had taken place in that room since the last evening we saw our friends there.

The lights shone just as brightly, and the fire in the grate glowed with all its former heat and cheerfulness, yet an air of depression seemed to pervade the whole room and its occupants.

Cobb walked the floor with a quick and jerky step, while Craft sat silently watching the embers in the grate, as if trying to solve some abstruse problem by their aid. Hathaway lay at full length upon the long sofa, near the further wall, puffing a cigar and sending out the circles of smoke in a manner peculiar to men who are in a nervous mood.

From the time that his comrades came that evening, with the exception of a few words of welcome, Cobb had appeared in this abstracted manner, and had seemed to be totally oblivious to his surroundings. His friends had, with great perception, understood his feelings, and had remained in their chairs, preserving a dead silence, waiting for him to open the conversation.

At last, with a quick movement, he stepped toward a side-table and filled a glass tumbler with whisky, and drank it to the bottom; then, setting down the glass, seemed to be again absorbed in his thoughts.

Only a minute, however, did he remain in this position; for it seemed that the liquor had revived him and the depressing sense of gloom was passing off. Turning to his friends, he exclaimed:

"Am I not a coward, thus to seek energy and strength in that bottle of liquor? But I cannot help it; I am in the saddest mood of my life! Until this moment I have had only a longing for the time to come for me to make the experiment; but now that the time has arrived, I must admit that I am terribly loath to undertake the ordeal. O my friends!" he cried, "it is certainly impossible for you to understand my feelings! I am like the condemned man on the scaffold about to leave this world, with its pleasures and sorrows, never again to see those whom he loves; never again to associate with those who have been dear and kind to him. I am to enter into a strange condition; and when I again move, and walk, and see, if, indeed, I ever do, it will be to find that those who were dear to me are but dust."

Saying this, he buried his face in his hands, bowed his head, and wept.

His friends said no word, their own feelings almost overcoming them, but waited the passing of this transitory outbreak of the man's feelings.

"There, dear boy," said Hathaway, rising and putting his arms about the latter; "there, let it pass. We are convinced, that if it was required of you, you would undertake this task; but it is not required, so let it end here and forever."

"Yes;" and Craft joined his voice with that of his friend. "Yes; there is no need for you to suffer, no need for you to imperil your life for the sake of advancing the sciences. Let it end!"

Cobb brushed away the tears, and looked at them a minute in silence; then, with a quick, jerky tone, said:

"No, it is too late! My fate ordains it! I will – I will, I say, go through this ordeal! Were I to stop now, what would you think of me? that I was a coward and afraid to carry out my boasted theory!"

He paused a moment, and then his face brightened.

"Enough!" he cried. "It's all over now, and I am Cobb once more! Were I never again to see the light of day, yet would I venture this uncertain existence!"

The old fire of his eyes flashed forth.

Craft and Hathaway saw that it was useless to argue the question with him, and reluctantly submitted to the inevitable.

Striking a match, the latter said:

“So be it, Cobb; I deplore your undertaking, but I admire your pluck.”

“Then to business,” returned Cobb, “for this is my last night with you. Now, listen and understand well your instructions: My leave is here; countersigned this morning,” and he touched his blouse pocket; “so to all inquiring friends to-morrow you are to say that I left last evening. All my property in this house is to be divided between you two, and to be yours forever, for I will have no use for any of it again, excepting a few things which I will take with me when I leave here to-night. The iron box which you see in the corner goes with us, as it contains papers and valuables which I hope to again see and use. This valise is packed with a few articles necessary upon our arrival at the chamber; with these exceptions, everything in all my rooms belongs henceforth to you both. In my laboratory you will find many interesting works and many valuable instruments; make such use of them as will improve your minds. My manuscripts are there also, and you will find much information in them. I wish you, Hathaway, to go to town and get the same teamster that we had before – you will find him at Neeland’s, and his number is fifty-six. Drive to this address,” giving him a paper, “where you will receive certain packages which will be ready; then drive to the old place where Craft remained with the driver before, and await his arrival. You must not go to the address until 11:30 o’clock, nor must you be at the rendezvous an instant before 12:30. Craft will meet you there at that time, and remain with the driver, while you will continue on to the pedestal. I will be at the latter place. Is that perfectly understood?”

Both signified assent.

“There is one other subject,” he continued, “which is of the most vital importance, and concerning which I pray you make no mistake. At 127 Market street is a medium-sized safe, within which is a full account of all that which has transpired up to this morning, as well as a full account of what will take place, as regards myself, to-night. It contains all information necessary to enable the person who may open it, a hundred years hence, to locate my body and bring me to life, should my arrangements fail to fulfill my expectations. This safe has been sealed, and the key thrown away by me. Upon the door is the legend: ‘Intrusted to the care of the Treasurer of the United States, and to be opened by him in the presence of the President and his cabinet, on January 1st, 1988.’ With this safe is a letter explaining that the contents are of the greatest importance, and that it will be for the good of the nation that the same be well taken care of; and further, that it is desired and requested that it be deposited in the Treasury vaults until the day set for its opening. This safe will be transferred to you upon presentation of this order,” and Cobb handed Craft a large envelope which he had taken from his inside pocket. “I charge you, upon your oath, to deliver it safely at the vault doors of the Treasury. Draw lots to see which of you shall take a leave of absence and take it to Washington. Gentlemen, be sure in this; it may be life or death to me.”

Both of the others reiterated their promises to carry out every detail as desired by him, not only in this, but in all other things connected with the work he had in hand.

“Good! And now, Hathaway, away upon your mission. Craft and I will await the arrival of the hack.”

Hathaway at once left the room, and passed out into the storm, while Craft settled himself down in an easy-chair by the fire.

Cobb wrote a P. P. C. card, and laid it upon the table.

“Give that,” he said, “to the boys at the mess; it will be for a longer time than any of them think, I guess. When they read it, little will they think that that card will be faded, musty, and, perhaps, crumbling into dust when its owner calls at the club again. Ah, Craft, never before did I leave a farewell card with such feelings of sadness! They will take it in their hands, read it, and cast it aside with the single remark, ‘Well, he’ll be back soon.’ Will be back soon! Yes: when their bones are dust; when their souls have passed out to their Maker; when they have each solved the grand problem of life!” Seizing the card in his trembling hand, he kissed it – “a brother’s kiss, a parting kiss to those

who are dear to me,” he cried. “Ah, Craft, perhaps before theirs will my bones be mingled with the dust of the earth!”

Dropping the card from his hand, he bowed his head in sad contemplation of the future. His thoughts were turning back, once more, into a gloomy channel.

“Cheer up, Junius, and let us trust, dear boy, that you will successfully pass through the ordeal and live among men again. Have you completed everything that is necessary to be done? or are there some few things yet to be gotten ready?” Craft hoped to change the current of his friend’s thoughts.

“Nothing. Everything is ready for me, and I hope – aye, I know – I am ready myself;” and he raised his eyes glittering with his powerful will.

“And to-night is your last with us? Oh, Cobb, I wish you would give this up!” imploringly said the other.

“No, no; oh, press me not, Craft!” and he looked beseechingly at his friend. “I must advance to my task; it is impossible to retrace my steps, yet God knows the heart-pains which rack my breast; He alone can fathom the utter misery of my position. From father, mother, brother, and sister, and from friends most dear I am soon to be parted forever – forever, *forever!* Hear you the word? *forever!*”

Like a wail of deepest anguish, prolonged and heart-breaking, came the last words, ending in a sob, as he sank into his chair and pressed his hands to his streaming eyes.

Let him not be called weak. He who could face death with a smile upon his lips, now cried at simple separation. But, alas! how much meant the word, separation – forever, *forever!*

The sound of carriage-wheels caused Cobb to start from his brooding. Raising his head, he glanced through the window just as the bright lights of a hack flashed along the road.

“Our time is up!” he exclaimed, with a strong effort at firmness; “there is our hack. Take that box and your coats, while I will take this valise.”

Saying this, he arose and put the things together near the door; then entering the other room, he put out the lights. Returning to the front room, he and Craft took their several loads, turned down the lamps, and descended the stairs to the hack.

Could anyone have seen Cobb’s eyes in that dark hall, he would have seen the tears falling many and fast. His anguish was great, and it was all that he could do to refrain from crying out in his pain. The quarters that had sheltered him for many a day and many a night, were being left behind, never again to be occupied by him. His books and instruments, the companions of many happy hours, were to be used no more. He had taken his last look upon them. Oh, it was hard! and his strength was sublime to overcome the tendencies to a complete breakdown, and a bursting into a flood of tears.

“Good-bye, dear old rooms! Good-bye to all that is in them – again, good-bye!”

Craft heard his sobs as he uttered the words, and his eyes filled to overflowing.

Down the walk they went without another word, and to the hack which was standing in the pouring rain, with its lights flashing out upon the night. There was no thought of the water that was streaming down upon them; other feelings filled their breasts. The door was thrown open, and Cobb motioned Craft to enter, and then followed himself.

“Drive according to your instructions,” he said to the driver; and the door was closed upon them.

As they started away, Cobb turned to the glass window, raised his hand gently toward his old quarters and murmured sadly: “Good-bye! good-bye!”

Away they rattled down the road toward the main gate.

“It’s a bad night, Craft.” Cobb’s voice was hard and forced, but it was evident that he was desirous of bringing his thoughts to other things.

“Yes, indeed it is; but good for us, nevertheless. How much warmer and drier are we in this hack than if we were outside to-night!” trying to put his thoughts into another channel.

“Number two! Half-past eleven o’clock – and all’s well!”

“Number three! Half-past eleven o’clock – and all’s well!”

And the cry was repeated on to all the posts, the answers coming clear and sweet to this poor, departing soul.

As the last sentinel gave his call, the carriage passed through the outer gate by the main guardhouse, where number one was walking his lonely and solitary beat. As they passed the porch, the sentinel repeated the round of posts, crying, in a sharp and pleasing tone:

“A-I-I’s well!”

“A good omen, by the gods!” and Cobb half sprang up in his seat. “A good omen, and it is for me! I feel it! I know it! Away, then, with all sorrow, and let me feel that this is my bridal trip, instead of my funeral voyage. Come, Craft, we are clear of the post; sing me the old song of ‘Benny Havens.’ It will cheer us up and I want to hear the words once more.”

“All right!” and soon Craft’s soft, melodious voice swelled forth in the strains of that old song so dear to the hearts of every man from West Point. Softly, but with power, came the words:

“Come, fill your glasses, fellows, and stand up in a row;
To sing sentimentally, we’re going for to go.
In the army there’s sobriety promotion’s very slow;
So we’ll sing our reminiscences of Benny Havens, oh!”

And then Cobb’s full voice joined in the chorus;

“Oh Benny Havens, oh! Oh! Benny Havens, oh!
So we’ll sing our reminiscences of Benny Havens, oh!”

As the last words of the chorus were sung, the lamps of California street shot their rays into the carriage.

On they went, but a silence again ensued, and neither spoke until the hack had reached McAllister street. Here Cobb caused the driver to pull up, and alighted, telling Craft to continue on until he came to where Hathaway was waiting for him.

He was then to transfer the iron box into the express wagon, dismiss the hack, and send on the team.

“You will find me at the appointed place,” he said, as he passed down the hill.

The hack soon passed out of sight, and Cobb continued on until he had arrived at the pedestal. Seeing no one in view, he applied his hand to the spring, and was soon inside of the chamber. Striking a light, he was enabled to ascertain that everything was just as he had left it. Turning to the compass box, he was satisfied that it had not been disturbed, for the needle still pointed to 993.

Opening his valise, he took from it the eight bottles of ozone, a two-quart bottle of a thick, dark-brown liquor, several rolls of silk bandages, three or four small boxes, and a tumbler and sponge.

By the time these preparations had been completed, Hathaway drove up with the express wagon.

Dismounting quickly, the two men unloaded the contents, and carried them inside.

First there were two iron boxes; these Cobb laid at the head of the case on the trestles. Next was a very heavy iron cylinder, and then a barrel of plaster of Paris and a ten-gallon keg of water; finally, a wooden frame-work with a large screw and wheel to it, was brought in.

All things being gotten into the chamber, Hathaway drove back to where Craft was in waiting with the driver. The team was quickly transferred, and the driver dismissed, and watched until well on his way to the city. The two men then joined Cobb in the chamber.

It was now one o’clock in the morning of December 2, 1887.

Cobb turned some alcohol into the asbestos lining of the heater, and soon a bright and cheerful fire made the room quite comfortable.

The bottom of the glass case, which was hung upon hinges, was then taken off and laid upon the smooth floor, then some of the old boxing was laid out to form a mixing-board for the plaster. These things being satisfactorily arranged, the plaster was mixed by Hathaway and Craft, while Cobb commenced undressing. Stripping himself to the skin, he bound his hair back with bands of flannel, and then thoroughly oiled himself from his head to his feet, that the plaster might not adhere to his naked body.

“Is the plaster ready to set?” he asked, as he stood with his back to the fire.

“Yes,” answered Craft, adding a little more water to the mass.

“Now spread the plaster upon the glass door, to the depth of two inches.”

This was done, and in a minute it had set; then another spreading was made to a depth of three inches. As soon as this was laid upon the former mass, Cobb carefully stretched himself upon the whole and placed his hands by his side. The plaster gave way a little as his form sunk in it.

“Now,” he said, “pile up the plaster until you have made it about five inches high, and I will remain in this position until it has set.”

They did so, and in about five minutes Cobb arose from the door, leaving a perfect mold of his body.

Next, he bound his head and body with wide strips of cloth, surrounding the loins, and up to the lower parts of the breasts, with some fifteen wrappings. This being satisfactorily accomplished, he threw a greatcoat over his shoulders, and said:

“I will now explain the working of the various apparatus which we have placed in position. After I have wrapped my face, as I will show you later on, I will lie down within this mold; you will then place the door, supporting me upon it, on its hinges and close the catch. Through the small glass door in the upper part of the case, you will arrange this platinum tube from my mouth to the orifice in the side of the case, just here where this wheel is,” and he pointed to a little wheel made on the end of a projecting tube through the side of the case. “Opening the small door, you will have free access to my body, and you will attach the bandages upon my face to the little spring catch which you see upon the inside of the case, near the upper part. Cover my face and bandages well with plaster of Paris, so that no entrance may be given to the ozone. Take those eight bottles of ozone, and quickly empty the contents upon both sides of my body, into the side troughs which you see, and at once close the door. I will take this position at 2:30 o’clock, and immediately take a dose of five grains of opium. In twenty minutes after, by your watches, you will turn this wheel on the side, one point, and every minute thereafter a point, until the forty-five points, or full revolution of the wheel, have been passed over. This is to shut off the supply of air gradually as the ozone commences to enter through the pores of my body. Have some fresh plaster ready, so that the instant this is accomplished, you can, by quickly opening the little door, pull out the tube from my mouth, and cover the opening with a spoonful of plaster; then, as quickly as possible, withdraw your hand, leaving the pipe inside, and close the door again and seal it with Portland cement. Before the ozone is placed within the case, see that the lower door upon which I lie is sealed by this preparation,” and he took a medium-sized bottle, and gave it to Craft. “Now, as regards the compass-needle, I will explain its action.” He moved over toward the instrument as he spoke, but suddenly started back upon discovering that the needle no longer pointed to the figures 993.

With a troubled look upon his face he gazed upon it. The needle now pointed to 1,007.8, or to a reading of 16 degrees 47.8 minutes.

“This is caused by some local attraction,” he said, looking around. Then, suddenly: “Ah! I see it! It is caused by those two iron chests. But I fear it cannot be helped; for if they are moved into any other position, the attraction, though it might not be so great now, would be greater at some future time. It cannot be helped! I am sorry, for it will add nearly a year to my stay in this chamber. You perceive that the needle of that compass points to 1,007.8, or 16 degrees 47.8 minutes. That is the magnetic variation, plus 14.8 minutes for those iron boxes, of this place at the present moment. The

magnetic pole is moving slowly toward the west; very slowly, indeed, but fast enough for me to utilize its movement. At present it is moving but 0.3 minutes per year, but this movement is increasing in a direct ratio of 0.145 minutes per year, which will bring the change in the variation, in 1988, to within 14.85 minutes of where the little hanging catch now is. My calculations were for one hundred years, but those iron boxes will carry it just one year longer, or to January 1, 1989. As I said, the needle will move 0.445 minutes toward the west this year, and 0.590 minutes next, and so on, arriving at 4 degrees 34.85 minutes on January 1, 1988; but this will be still 14.85 minutes from the little catch which you see hanging down. In one year from that time, it will strike it. The instant that it does do so, the fine wheel-work is released, and the heavy weight will cause it to move; this movement will drop the large beam upon the glass bulbs of the batteries, break them, and drop the zinc into the electropoion fluid. The batteries will then work, and I will have my power. The flask of alcohol is broken, its contents saturating the asbestos feeder, while a current heating to a white heat the platinum strip, starts the fire. At the same time the same current through these magnets withdraws the bolt holding the under door of the glass case in which I am: it falls by my weight, and I roll upon the bed-springs, while the door, relieved of its weight, closes again, thus shutting off the escape of the ozone. In descending through the bottom of the case, the bandages are torn off of my face, and another current of electricity passes through my heart by means of the proper discs. Thus, you see, I am released from my ozone prison into good and fresh air; the ozone is shut off, and my life is brought back by the shock of electricity. From the alcohol heater, which is by this time all aglow, I receive the warmth necessary to again set my blood circulating properly through my veins. Of course, I am weak, very weak; so I at once commence refreshing myself from the liquors in those bottles. After that I prepare some of the beef juice, clothe myself in one of the suits I have in that small iron chest, and I am a new man. If the air in the chamber is not pure enough for me, I have plenty in that cylinder, and can turn it on at any time, for it contains 8,000 cubic inches of air under pressure of twelve atmospheres, or, in round numbers, 96,000 cubic inches; giving me plenty of air for over five hours, without counting that which may be in the chamber. Before that time I will be out of the place. Last comes the wooden frame and wheel; that we will now set in position. I had this made for fear that I might not have the necessary strength to open the door when the time came; with it in position I can bring a pressure to bear upon the slab door of this chamber and burst it open, if need be. Do you understand it all now?" and he smiled at the curious expression on their faces.

"Yes," said Hathaway; "but why have you gone to all this trouble with that compass, when you could have put in good-sized springs, as well?"

"That is just it, my boy. I could not have put in a spring just as well. Had I used a spring, it might be rusted or broken by the time I would want it to work. Batteries could not be thought of at all, as they would not keep so long. In fact, I had to get something that was as sure in its work as the earth is in its movement around the sun. Nothing is more sure than that the compass needle will slowly turn back toward the west. It is simple and sure; why, then, should I seek for anything different?"

"I understand it all; your explanation is quite clear," said Craft. "It is a most marvelous and ingenious combination of natural laws with human auxiliaries."

Taking his watch out of his pocket, Cobb then said:

"The time is passing; let us at once to our work. You both know your duties; so commence."

At exactly thirty minutes past two, Cobb had taken the opium and had his nostrils, and mouth between the lips and teeth, filled with fine asbestos cloth, while strips of the same material were placed over his whole face, leaving but a small opening for the platinum tube between his lips. He had previously thoroughly saturated the bandages about his loins and body with the brown compound which he took from the bottles, and which he had informed them was the nourishment to give sustenance to his system during the period of his inanimation.

Lying down within the plaster mold, he told them to place the door in its position. Craft and Hathaway, by hard work, got it on to the hinges, and fastened the catch; then opening the little top door, asked Cobb if it was all right so far.

“Yes,” answered Cobb, partly opening his mouth, and speaking through the filling. “Yes; it is all right. And now, no tears, no show of grief; let me say a lasting farewell. I thank you, dear boys, for all your kindness to me, and it grieves me sorely that I will never again see you; but such is fate! May God bless you a thousand fold, and watch over you through life, is my last wish! Take my hand, each of you; there, that is right; good-bye! Now fit the plaster well over my face, and look to your watches.”

“Good-bye, dear old friend!” they both exclaimed, while the tears streamed down their cheeks. “Again good-bye! and God be with you!”

Craft then quickly broke the seals of the ozone bottles, while Hathaway placed the perforated vessel containing the stronetic acid at Cobb’s head.

Craft then placed all of the eight bottles of ozone in the case, and, wrapping his coat about his arm to cover the hole and prevent the escape of the ozone gas, scattered the contents on either side of the body, but not touching the door upon which Cobb lay. Taking his arm out, the door was fastened, and their attention was given to watching for the time when they should commence turning the small wheel at the side of the case.

Save a slight raising of his finger in token of recognition of their last farewell, Cobb had not moved since the closing of the door.

At 2:41 his chest was rising and falling in a regular manner, while a slight tremor of the case denoted his heavy breathing.

As their watches showed 2:51, Craft turned the wheel its first notch. From that moment on, not a word was spoken by either of them, nor a sound made, save the sharp click of the wheel as it turned onward toward the 45th division.

They watched their friend through the glass cover; the heaving of the chest became less and less, the breathing lower and lower, while a purple hue settled upon his body.

At thirty-six minutes past four, the last division of the wheel had been reached. Craft then took a spoonful of plaster, and, inserting his hand carefully inside of the case, pulled out the tube from Cobb’s mouth, and poured the half-liquid plaster into the hole in the cast.

Taking his hand out, the door was carefully fastened and cemented around its edges; the same thing was done around the edges of the lower door. They then put out the fire in the heater, and set the inside spring of the slab door of the pedestal.

Going to the case, Craft laid his hand upon it, and then, kneeling at its side, gave way to his grief, and the tears came thick and fast.

“Come, Craft,” said Hathaway, whose eyes were also filled to overflowing; “come, old boy; it is all over. We have performed our part, and, perhaps, are accessories to a man’s suicide. God be with him! he was a noble man, a true friend, and one we will never cease missing.”

Craft arose, and they passed out into the cool morning air. The marble door swung back upon its hinges, the inside catch gave a sharp sound as it closed upon the latch, and Junius Cobb was entombed alive.

Quickly applying the cement to the edges of this door, as they had done to the glass case inside, the two friends, seeing that it was perfectly set, descended the hill and passed out of sight.

CHAPTER VI

For nearly five years, Jean and Marie Colchis occupied the old house in Duke's Lane.

The old man worked hard, and long hours were passed in arduous experiments. The ozone machine had performed its mission, and was a thing of the past. The hair on Colchis' brows was whiter, the lines of care on his face deeper, and his gait slower.

Fortune had smiled upon him. Money had rolled in, and the interior of the dilapidated old building was in strange contrast with the exterior. The rooms were handsomely furnished: bric-a-brac, books, a piano, and a thousand and one little *joujous* dear to the feminine heart, gave evidence of the hand that had wrought this change – Marie Colchis.

The seventeen-year-old girl to whom Junius Cobb had bidden a tearful adieu, had become a highly educated woman of twenty-one. The beauty of her youth grew with her years. Her disposition was commensurate with her beauty. The solace of her father in his age, the pride of his heart, she became the one object for which he lived and labored.

Often and often had this sweet girl asked of her father some knowledge of Junius Cobb. When would he come? Was it known where he was? and did her father think that he still remembered his old friends in Duke's Lane? Then, as her thoughts wandered to their last interview, with its sad parting, tears filled her eyes, and her bosom heaved and fell with deep, sorrowing emotion.

She still loved him; time had wrought no change. Her father saw it, knew it; and while a shade of sadness passed over his brow, he simply muttered:

“It must be done!”

Thus time passed.

A great invention was Colchis at work upon. It would astonish the world; it would make him famous for life; his wealth would become vast in the extreme. But none of these thoughts disturbed the calm equanimity of this great man.

He cared not for fame and honor, for his life was about run out. But wealth! Ah! that was another thing! He did want it; but for whom? Not himself? Who knows?

“They will want it, will want all I can give them,” he said to himself many times.

Later on, there came many visitors to the house in Duke's Lane. They came singly, and sometimes in pairs. They remained awhile closeted with the old man, and then they went away. They were scientists sent by the government to report upon the invention of Jean Colchis.

One day, after a more lengthy visit than usual from one of these gentlemen, Colchis entered the little parlor where Marie sat reclining in a large chair, reading a book of poems.

Upon his approach, she quickly arose, and greeted him with warm affection.

“My daughter,” he commenced, as he led her to a chair and seated himself by her side, “we are going to leave Duke's Lane. I believe the time has come when you should see more of the world; should mix in society, and take the place which your talents, beauty, and moral attainments give you by right. You are nearly twenty-one years old, highly educated, and exquisitely beautiful. You will make friends wherever you go, and you will have suitors by the score. With wealth, position, wit, and beauty, what more can you desire? Do not interrupt me, darling,” as his daughter was about to speak; “I know what you would say: that your heart is given to Junius Cobb, and that you want no other suitors. I have had fears, Marie, that Junius would never come back to us in this world – that, perhaps, he is dead.”

A cry of anguish burst from the poor girl's lips:

“Oh! do not, do not say that! He is not dead! You know it, father! Oh! tell me he is not dead!” and she sank at her father's feet, overcome with grief.

“O, God!” breathed the old man between his set teeth; “I fear it must be done!” Then, leaning over and stroking the golden locks of his daughter, he said:

“Marie, look up.”

Her eyes, glistening with tiny tear-crystals, were turned up to his.

“Look into my eyes, my child, and listen well to my words. Do you love Junius Cobb as fondly now as when you were a girl, on the night when he said good-bye and left you? Answer me as your heart dictates.”

“O, father! can you doubt it?” A heavenly look appeared in her eyes. “Would to God I could be with him in this life, or in death!” Her head fell upon her father’s bosom.

“Then, life without your lover is worse than death?” and her father fixed his eyes in a hoping, expecting, desiring expression upon his daughter.

“Yes!” burst from her lips; “a thousand times yes! for what is life without him? If I be not with him in death, then death is oblivion!”

“My noble, true-hearted daughter!” and he folded her to his heart. “Your lover is true to you – that I can swear. Await with patience, my child, till God wills your union. Now, once more listen to my words: it is my desire that you enter the world of life and fashion, rule my house as its mistress; entertain, make friends, and let no worry enter thy heart. Do this, and if at the end of four years more, you ask for Junius Cobb, your betrothed, he shall come to you. I swear to you, my daughter, that my words are true.”

“Father, I will do thy bidding.” She wept tears of hope as she sank into her chair.

Soon the world of fashion, the society of money and brains, began to chipper-chapper of the new Cræsus and his divine daughter, who had suddenly come into their midst.

The Colchis mansion was among the finest of those beautiful homes which have made San Francisco famous as a city of palaces. His hospitality was prodigal; his entertainments fit for kings. He and his beautiful daughter were objects around which fluttered the culture, the fashion, and the wealth of the city.

Men came, saw the divinity, and worshiped at the shrine. Suitors implored her love, begged it, but without success. To all was Marie Colchis kind, honorable, and lovely, but to none gave she the slightest encouragement.

Time passed, and still she was the same. Suitors still persevered, but without success. Against her no word of disrespect could be uttered, none could bear feelings save of love and admiration; all spoke of her as the frozen sunbeam.

Colchis père saw it, and understood it; she could never change.

Then Jean Colchis arose one morning, and told his daughter that he must go away on important duty. His stay might be protracted to months, he could not tell her how long. She was to remain, and under the guardianship of her housekeeper, she should find what amusement she chose.

Their adieus were spoken, and Colchis sailed out of the Golden Gate in a ship of his own.

Months passed, and Marie Colchis grew sad and disconsolate. Her lover gone, and her father away, there was nothing to live for. Hours upon hours she sat and wept – wept tears of such sadness as only a heart bowed down by the most intense sorrow could cause to flow.

The house on the hill was closed to the world, and Marie lived but in the past, and with slight hopes for the future.

It was the 13th of March, 1897, and Jean Colchis had arrived home to his child. There was sadness in his eyes as he clasped his darling daughter to his heart; but a firm, determined expression overspread his countenance, as though he had fought some great battle, and felt himself the victor.

“Never again, dear old father, can I open this house to the world,” she said to him, as they sat and spoke of the past.

“And never again shall you, my child,” he had returned, holding her in a loving embrace.

“Let me leave the world and all it contains! Let me go and bury my body as I have my love! Father, I am dying!”

The time had come. Jean Colchis saw that not an hour was to be lost. Fate had ordained it; he must comply, though he murdered his beloved child!

“Grieve not, my child,” he tenderly said, “the future is bright and assured. I am going to take you to your husband!”

Like a burst of the sun through a dark and dreary sky, her eyes lighted up, and she sprang toward him, clasped him around the neck, and covered his face with kisses. Then she arose, staggered, and fainted. The good news was too sudden.

Two weeks after this eventful day, Jean Colchis and his daughter sailed away in the ship which had once before borne him out of the harbor. As the vessel passed through the Golden Gate, the father and daughter stood at the rail and took one last look at the life behind them.

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