

take her head, I'll take the legs. Got to be careful of the ankle. No, not you Dreen," as Solomon tried clumsily to be helpful. "You are only a husband," a smile flickering on the doctor's kindly face. His good humor showing up in an emergency. "That's it, George. To the car with her. You two may come along." Solomon and Foster followed into the car.

The plaster-cast on Lena's ^{leg} foot had hardly hardened when ~~when~~ Clara, Mr. Forrest's second wife, entered. She went directly to Lena and kissed her, as she fondled the lovely disarray of her hair lying in soft wavy folds about the head.

Foster went over and took Clara's hand. "Thank you," he said. The words sounded a bit hollow in his ears, as if the voice belonged to someone else. As if it were an echo. But George knew that Foster meant it. If he had no love for his grandfather's second wife there was a healthy and respectful relationship between the two. Clara's subtle interventions had helped Foster often to see his mother - until his mother married again.

Clara looked into the eyes of Foster and opened hungry arms to embrace him. Over his head she smiled up to Dr. Capen, saying enigmatically, "So we meet again...!"

CHAPTER IV

...From The Depths My Salvation...

Perhaps it was because of his non-aggressive, sensitive nature that Dr. Elias Capen had a hard struggle (to ^{getting started} get initiated) in the practice of medicine. As a matter of fact, there was no start at all for two months, and in the third there was one call. In the fourth month he made three calls - and for the rest of the year the ratio was about three per week.

With a house to keep up for his aged parents and an older sister the future looked pretty bleak through his office windows. It was^a hard enough struggle^{through} the years of medical school without any visible financial support, and now^{to} sit there and watch the world go by!

Then one day a dilapidated vagabond from nowhere tramped into his office. He had the bearing of a royal personage despite his worn frock, and bagginess at the knees. His face though hardened and set in corrugated lines through life's ^{vici}ssitudes, still retained a mellowness of cherubic quality; and a look of elemental goodness shone from his smiling eyes. Maybe his lordly bearing was due to his heroic proportions, maybe he was king and ruler among his own. Be as it may, he went through the first painful treatment of venereal affliction with flying colors, without batting an eye and without the slightest grimace as the steel sound seared through the urethral stricture.

"Bit hot," he remarked with a smile as the doctor looked to him to see how he was taking it, "but go right ahead."

"A neglected infection," Dr. Capen tried to justify the ^m somewhat rough treatment. "The delicate membrane of the tube glued together, forming a stricture - a barrier. Had to be broken through. Will be much easier from ^rheefin." And the outcast of society had no grievance against a society which afflicted him with the disease. "You are doing okay, Doc," he said affably, "used to much worse."

There was that firmness and assurance in his voice of a man entirely ⁿ independent of everybody and everything but his own whim and will, who carried the freedom of the vast open spaces within him, who oozed the breath and life of the great outdoors, who had not a worry in his head.

And this fellow comes in like a lord, a bit boisterous perhaps, but a lord nonetheless, A flamboyant lord. A man of wide proportions, of wide knowledge, of wide cheer, and wide humor and smile. He doesn't come in like a thin sunbeam through a small chink, but like a storm of

light. Like hope and opportunity knocking at the door.

"Ah, my dear doctor," he says, "be happy, be happy, be happy!" It's a habit of his to repeat things three times, for good luck. Especially the good things. And with a broad smile on his face and the light of prophecy in his eyes he proclaims: "I am bringing you good tidings, so be of good cheer. The world is full of happiness, so stretch out a hand and grab some. Maybe you don't know how, but try anyway. It's all around you, and it's for free. Like the air and the water and the trees and, and the sun and the moon! Don't sit on your ^{ass} (arse) and expect it to come to you. For that's the way to become crochety and old, and a morose and moribund fool. You have dependents, I know, and you have to sit around in this smelly hole and never glimpse the sun. But don't let it get you, never fret or cower." And out of the vastness of frayed breeches, as if to prove a point, a gold coin ^{Appeared} (came out) which he offered to the doctor. "Take it in token of a job well done," he said. But Dr. Capen averted his face, as if to avoid temptation, and motioned to his patient to put the coin back in his pocket.

And the lordly man put ^{it} in his pocket as silently as he ^{had} offered it and murmured his goodwill to the doctor. He didn't thank him, for to him thanks are but an empty gesture.

But the doctor was happy. As if the burden of cares and worries had slipped off his shoulders and left him a free man. One cannot account for such moments of happiness; they may go as they come. But often without any seeming reason there is a good basis for such elation.

Happiness, like opportunity, was like a bell in his ears, a distant call in the subⁿconscious mind. It was a sweet ringing, and coming ever closer.

They came in "their generations". Old, young, and still younger. From the slums of the water front, from ships of the four corners of

the earth; in uniform and out of uniform they trooped into his office. They paid him, for their lord had warned them.

He cleansed them of their running sores and healed them. And they paid him.

But the lordly man with the lordly bearing, he never showed up again. Where was he? Not a word. Had he left these parts? No one would say. There was a knowing smile on their faces. But they would not say.

The mystery of the waterfront.

With the spread of the reputation of his skill invitations from brothels and "kept-houses" came to Dr. Capen. It was a "legitimate" request: To keep them from disease. And he accepted them though not without hesitancy.

They served as the first rung on (the way up) the ladder of success in his chosen field, the medical profession - in particular the frontiers of surgery. In 1903, with a modicum of full fledged anesthesia and all the asepsis known at the time, modern surgery was still in the hands of frontiersmen, groping timidly onward. The road was tortuous and uncertain, and the dead were strewn by the wayside in great numbers - especially in the case of major surgery. More than a few, unassessed, went under the knife, and the lucky ones escaped alive. Dr. Samuel Sheraton, Presbyterian Minister of the "Church on the Heights", was one of the unlucky ones. He died in the month of August, 1903 - almost to the day Dr. Capen had delivered his son ten years before --- of a gall bladder operation. Although Dr. Capen's part was only ^{that} of assistant to the surgeon, he blamed himself for his friend's death. He revered him as scholar and as man. Physician, consultant and friend of the family he should have resisted the advice of Portgrave's best surgeon and his own best judgment, to let him undergo surgery. Even as a novice in the sanctum of the operatin^g room, he ^{had} come to grips with the short-

comings of surgical technique, the pre-operative preparation, and the post-operative care. The margin between life and death seemed so narrow. Where was the boost that would ^{have} ^{ed} ^{ht} widen the margin and broug^{ht} his friend to the shore of life, where the sustaining force that would stem the ebb and bring the full tide of life?

To find the touch, the spring that'll breach, unlock the barrier, - the source, the spring of life!

Ten years before he thought he had found it. But that was ^a mere accident. Blind compulsion!

He remembers the night and the dawn. The night when he had struggled to save Mrs. Sheraton and force labor, and the dawn when he fought to revive her infant who was obdurate in the lethargy of dying.

He remembers it well:

First the mother with terrifying eclamptic convulsions, that could terminate life any moment. And then the newborn. Almost lifeless with but a ripple, a wavelet - a condescension to a normal heartbeat. With every convulsive seizure threatening the already weakened heart of the mother Dr. Capen had to expel ~~the infant~~ from its snug and cozy womb-nest to stop the source of toxins poisoning her blood.

It was a long, grim and gruelling battle, skill triumphing. On his wan face at last the smile of victory, and on his arms the inert body of the infant.

The gamut of resuscitation attempts and their failures! A powerful stimulus to the heart, with the old method, and another return of the deathly lividness to the transparent face and body. A new method has the same dire results. It was on the second hour of effort and Dr. Capen, with the long sleepless night back of him, was rapidly becoming exhausted. The doubt ^{ASTO} whether he ^d ever bring life into the flaccid little limbs, movement to the still lung cage, or another heart-wave, began to pall on him like an endless dark void stretching before

him. He wasn't sure that the mind was responding to the command of his will. A last measure. A desperate measure! But...! And here Dr. Capen's mind went into a maze of confusing thoughts. Could he give up after the last measure had failed him? If it failed. If the last measure had broken the thread of life in Dr. Sheraton's child! If his friend were only here. Then he would know. But he's away on his Sabbatical leave.

Life or death!

A pall of darkness. One gleam of light in the rising sun. The sun overhead, will it explode?

Holding the lifeless form by its tiny hands and feet, he slams hard the arched back on the tiny mattress...How hard? Mind and body went numb, except for the pounding heart in his ears. The sun hadn't exploded, but had become a ~~became~~ benevolent globe, shedding ^{ing} life and warmth.

He had won!

The shock that touched off the main spring on its surge of life, that sent the delicate balance wheel swinging merrily on its way!

Pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat, pat! Not a thready pulse-wave, but a distinct heart contraction, a palpable, bounding circulatory system. The rhythmic rise and fall of the diminutive slender chest walls, the faint propelling up and down of the filiform diaphragm! The kindled flame of life actually burning and giving off heat. The roseate cheek, and the blush of the hairless head. Already the mentor and controller is installed in ^{the} grey-white of the frail brain. Not too cold, not too hot. Cold is death, too much heat congeals live tissue.

One good lusty cry now. Fresh, clean oxygen - a bit searing to the fragile pink lining of the lung, but, oh, how refreshing! Not the air chewed over and polluted with toxins and your own excrement in your mother's womb. You are on your own now, with your own oxygen tank - as wide as the earth and as high as the atmosphere. Inexhaustible. You are a tiny speck, bathed and nourished in this ocean of life, but an enti-

ty, a little world in itself. A wondrous little world!

All right you, who are still namless, all right, one more belch. Make a clean sweep of it. That bit of meconium, remnant and reminder of another world - the womb world - get rid of it; for the cord that tied you to the other world has long been severed. Now you are screaming because you want to go back to the cozy warmth of that other world, where your mother did the breathing and everything else for you. Being born is an achievement, even if the new world is cold and raw, and you feel so distressfully naked. You are doubtful of the achievement, and you resent the mighty Hand that gathered the elements of your previous existence, fashioned you and forced you into this inimical world! But soon sleep will overtake you, and the old world you'll forget, before you learn to know the new one.

CHAPTER V

Clara

In his hour of success Dr. Capen had not forgotten his friends of the past - those that ^{had} spread his fame as a healer of the social diseases. A dubious honor to have become known as a "clap" specialist, perhaps, but not a detriment to one's soul if one is honest and not unscrupulous. It gave him his start to reach the status of a prominent surgeon; and in fond memory and gratefulness he had taken off time from his busy schedule - between ^{the hours of} four and five, afternoons - to devote to those unfortunates afflicted with venereal disease. An hour when the poor were more welcome than those that could afford to pay. A dedicated hour, an hour almost sacred to him.

One afternoon, during the hour, the nurse informed him that a la-