

she had to veil her face in order to protect herself against the lust of man. She was completely kept out of touch with the world and allowed no other knowledge than that relating to the home. She passed from the tutelage of her parents to the tutelage of her husband when she got married. In conjugal life, she was considered fit only for motherhood and for the discharge of domestic duties, and not for anything else. She could not administer her own separate property, much less that of the conjugal partnership. The husband could dissipate the property of his wife without her having any recourse other than perhaps a vain protest. Even when married, she could not leave home alone without exposing her reputation to the talk and gossip of

society. Feminine virtue was considered so fragile that contact with the world was enough to defile it. Malice was ever ready to waylay woman with its vileness. The husband could stay all day and night out of the home, perhaps have several paramours, but the wife was forced to complete fidelity—however insulting and humiliating her husband's conduct might be.

Nowadays, the domestic seclusion of woman is a thing of the past, at least in most countries. Although she still reigns supreme in the home, she has been gradually invested with certain rights which heretofore have been monopolized by man. Now, woman is free to educate herself

(Please turn to page 24)

Babe and the Moon

By HENRY PHILIPS BROAD

(Concluded)

Then, at last, came dawn and with it exhausted sleep. Coma, Babe thought. And dread and terror invaded her soul. She wished she could stay longer to see it through, to hold his hand until the last bitter moment . . . but how explain it to the day-nurse? So she took a long, long look at him, then knelt down and reverently kissed the hands she had stroked so often. And then ran home, death in her heart. She would never see him again, never.

For the first time in the history of her career as a nurse Babe could not sleep. Fortunately Sally was on morning duty so that she had the room all to herself. It would have been unbearable torment to have had the chatterbox about. The houseboy brought her breakfast tray, but she had him take it back. Then she lay down on her bed, pulling the mosquito-net about her, not in protection from blood-sucking pests, but because she felt somehow more guarded from possible intruders. If they saw the net down they would think her asleep and leave her alone.

How was he now? Perhaps already . . .? She who had seen and met death so many times and in so many forms was trembling now at the dire

possibility. She knew he would not pass the day. Twice she rose, peered through the shutters at the rambling frame structure that was the hospital. But there was not the slightest commotion, nothing to indicate that what she felt with increasing terror was approaching had already occurred.

Hour after hour wheeled agonizingly slowly past. Babe lay tossing on her bed, waiting, waiting. . . . Later there was a short quick rap at the door. Ah! They had come to tell her. Her heart pounded wildly, anxiety strangled her; she could not answer the rap. The door opened and the chief nurse stepped in, daintily efficient as always with a white cap on her marceled gray hair and the silver bar on her slim shoulders. She glanced furtively at the bed, believed the paralyzed Babe to be asleep and tiptoed out of the room again.

Babe leaped from her bed. The chief nurse! What did it mean? What? She never invaded the rooms but for serious cause. Was it because . . . Had someone seen her? Flames of shame and despair shot through her. She, Babe, a nurse on duty! A dying man, to be sure,

who had mistaken her for another woman, but a man just the same. She hid her head in the pillows, sobbing her sorrow and her fear and shame into their crisp cleanliness, hoping that it would all be over soon; and all the time stood before her the harrowing certainty that at any moment one of the chattering girls would come in and bring her the news of Major Dexter's death.


It was Sally, returning from afternoon duty, who brought her the news, but not the news she so fearfully expected.

"Say, Babe," Sally stormed, cap already pulled off and white uniform flying; "Now do tell me what you have been doing to that case of yours, you witch, you." She sat down on the wicker lounge. Babe remained on her bed unable to stir, her heart fairly bursting with anxiety.

"You've heard the news, haven't you, Babe?" But Sally generally did not require an answer to her queries; so she went on, prattling gaily while she removed her shoes. "Well, you know, it's almost miraculous the way he's come out of it. Not even a temperature since this morning. Carolyn tells me he asks for chow—says they are starving him! Old Gardner is just tickled hibiscus-color. Gives himself all the credit as usual, of course. Chiefy says she came in to tell you about it, but you were fast asleep. But Babe, say, are you still asleep? One would think you never even heard of Dexter for all the interest you take in him."

The prattle was all lost on Babe. All she knew was that he was alive. Motionless, but exultant with joy, she lay on her bed. He was alive! He was to live! Glorious! A thousand warm springs welled up in her, flooding her with indescribable happiness; something that had not before existed was born in her and so rejoiced her that her heart sang in exultation. He was to live!

Hurriedly she rose and dressed, in preparation for another night on duty. In the sitting-room Sally was entertaining some callers and as Babe passed through on her way to the hospital, she called, chidingly: "Babe, my love, if I were you,




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I'd make up a bit. This is what they call the psychological moment, or something like that. . . But look at Babe, boys, look! I swear she's put on rouge to-night. Smart old Babe! You do look swell, Babe."

It was not rouge, though. It was when Sally spoke to her that she realized with sudden sharpness that she would have to face him. After what had happened! Her immense joy at his recovery had drowned out all other feelings. What was she to do? Should she play sick, worn out—plausible enough after the long strain? But no, no, she was no malingerer, was Babe. And upon reflection, she realized that she did not want to have another nurse take care of him now. Why, they would all be trying their little wiles on him, Chiefy not expected.

She would carry on. He had been in delirium when he kissed her. With returning health he would have forgotten all about it. So in great perturbation she went to the hospital. The chart but substantiated the news of the miraculous change in the patient's condition. Babe went into his room, cheeks burning. She had looked at herself in the small mirror in the hall. Sally was right; her flushed cheeks looked rouged indeed. At the same time Babe realized how very becoming the color was.

The fifth night had come. Major Dexter had so much improved already that the chief nurse hinted at his not needing a special nurse any longer. "That's to give herself a chance," Sally whispered.

When Babe came in that evening, with cheeks burning red in her small face, he greeted her with outstretched hands, a boyish smile on the still ravaged features. "You do not recognize me now, do you, Miss Martin?"

"I am mighty glad I do not," Babe said, delighted beyond words at his cordiality.

It was very still in the room and in the world outside. Slowly above the slumbering flame trees in the yard the moon rose.

"I must have been a pretty mess of a case, was I not?" he asked after a while. "I bothered you a lot, did n't I?"

"Oh no, no; not at all."

"Really not?"

"You talk too much, Major. . . You must sleep now. Sleep will do you good."

How many countless times in her life as a nurse had she uttered these words! And what a new and wonderful significance they had now, addressed to him! She reiterated them almost pleadingly: "Sleep, do! It will do you no end of good."

Obediently he closed his eyes, but his hand remained on hers. Only now it came to her that he had been stroking her hand for quite a time.

But she could see he was not to remain quiet for long. There was, she perceived, a new restlessness about him. Twice she caught him looking at her in an interrogating, inquisitive sort of way, as though there were something he could not comprehend, something he wanted to learn from her. Perhaps she had better leave him alone? She rose and went out on the screened-in porch. He might sleep now.

Outside the fairy wand of the moon had transformed a drab world into one of inexpressible splendor. The flame-trees languorously waved their crimson blooms in the soft breeze that was fanned in from the sea. A car or two sped through the lighted streets beyond, headlights paling into insignificance in the marvelous silver-and-gold brightness that enwrapped all things.

Babe sighed. She would soon be leaving the Islands. In three months. She would miss these moonlight nights—but not the moonlight alone.

"Miss Martin!" The call interrupted her musings.

Babe went back to her patient. "What is it, Major? You cannot sleep? A sleeping-powder, then? The Colonel says you must sleep."

He shook his head and a quick smile flitted across his face. "Sleeping-powder! When all I want to do is to talk to you?"

"But it may not be good for you."

"It will not hurt me. But how can I talk to you when you sit in your chair so stiffly and so primly? Come over here," and he made her sit down on his cot.

"But, Major. . . if someone should come in!" Babe stammered. The thought was so strong that she made as if to rise. Lord! She, a nurse! Discipline, dignity! Yet it was unutterably sweet to sit still and have him stroke her hand.

"Don't worry, little girl. Gardner is over at Miller's playing bridge. You know old Gardner when it comes to bridge. He'll play bridge in heaven,—that is, if he ever gets there. . . But tell me, wasn't the old medico just a little bit worried about me, eh?"

"He never said so, to me at least."

"Now tell me, did I behave well while in your charge? I asked you that before, but you did not say."

"We nurses know what to expect." Babe spoke hesitatingly, adding as if in disculpation: "Yours was a very complicated case."

"So that's it! That implies a whole lot. So I was a bad boy?" He had turned on his side and looked her full in the face. Under this scrutiny her cheeks flamed up and in embarrassment she turned her head away.

"Miss Martin! You must tell me!" He tried to rise from his bed. Immediately the nurse in her overcame the woman. "Major! If you are careless you'll have a fever again tomorrow. And I do not want you to get a relapse?" She spoke vehemently and into his eyes came a new expression.

"Why not? Why don't you want me to get a relapse?"

"Because. . . because. . ." she faltered, "because they'll blame me for it."

There was a silence. Then: "Miss Martin! You've got to tell me what has happened or I shall not care whether or not the fever comes back, though I'd hate to have you blamed for it. There is something I must know. Absolutely must! You will tell me, wont you?" He had imprisoned her hand between his two and in his eyes looked at her so entreatingly that she could not, as she wished, flee from the room.

"You will tell me, yes, you will! Miss Martin, did I. . . did I. . . mention names while I was ill? Tell me, did I?" A tone of anxiety in his voice crept into her heart. "Was I. . . was I. . . un-



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kind to anyone?"

"No, Major. You were not unkind. You were... most kind... to... to everybody."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Quite sure."

He lay still for a while. Then: "Are you sure I mentioned no names? Can you assure me I did not?"

Babe's face flushed scarlet. Then the trained nurse in her responded: "When we graduate we swear never, under any circumstances, to divulge bedside confidences. You must ask no further questions, Major Dexter,—no more." Her voice shook.

"But it is not that, little girl; it's not that! And you divulge no secret, really, if you just answer me. There is something not quite clear to me," he added. "Tell me, was not... did not a young woman come to see me one evening? And she stayed here for a little while?"

Her heart pounded so within her that she could not speak; and again he queried. Finally, straining at the words, she said: "No one has been to see you yet. Orders from the Colonel."

Passing a thin hand through his dark wavy hair and looking at her intently, he whispered: "Yet it seems to me... I could swear to it... I don't know... but it seems to me that a young woman came to me one moonlit evening and sat down by me and..." Now his voice sunk to an almost inaudible breath. "And she kissed me... and I kissed her... and she said..." Babe's heart stood still.

"And she kissed me," he went on, as inaudibly as before, "and she said she loved me... she said that..."

He sat up straight. "Miss Martin, little girl, tell me... was that a reality or just a dream? A reality,—or only a dream?"

Thus he asked, eyes imploringly set on hers, hand warm on her icy trembling one. "You were here—you could tell me."

"It was only a dream," she whispered at last, brokenly. "A beautiful dream." And flung both hands before her flaming face.

Was it the voice that said what the words did not quite betray? He sat up abruptly and looked

at her in unending surprise. Then with very gentle persuasion he drew her to him and took her hands, still wet with tears, and stroked them, however much she resisted, and kissed them.

"My dear girl, my dear little girl," he repeated. Then folding her in the crook of his arm: "And what keeps us, tell me, from making the dream become a reality?"

Apparently nothing kept them from so fascinating a pursuit, for three weeks afterwards they were married. To the regiment, to the hospital and even to Manila the news came with the force of a thunderclap. What? Dexter! That dashing fellow Dexter! You don't say? A nurse... and not even a young one at that... She nursed him... hm! You never can tell in this blamed country. Poor Dexter.

It was Sally, vivacious, unconventional Sally who probably came nearest solving the puzzle, but she had lain awake nights thinking of Babe and her perfectly astounding piece of luck. Babe! How in the world's goodness did she manage it? Why, it sort of made you feel queer to see one like Babe arrive where you have for years tried to arrive yourself.

The evening after the wedding—it had taken place at the chief surgeon's on General Luna street—Sally had a few callers to tea and the topic hinged on the still inexhaustible subject of Babe Martin. Lieutenant Timothy Ward, pressing Sally's lively hand, said, between puffs at cigarettes: "I truly believe he has been smitten with sudden blindness—poor Dexter." And Captain Peter Lyle who was never far from where Sally found herself, added: "She must have bewitched him, really. We all know he had been going stronger than strong—and then to fall for Babe!"

Sally remained pensive for a minute or so, then she burst out: "You never said a truer word, Pete. Bewitched him, yes, that's it." Both exclaimed: "Sally! Are you getting superstitious in your old days?"

She shook her head, but could not be induced to say more. But she thought to herself: "It was that moonlight... It sort of changes you... mellows you... Babe Martin—one night she

looked, she looked positively beautiful! Sort of like a saint, I'd say... and Dexter, he was no saint himself... Attraction of the extremes. Something like that..."

"Sally! Why so pensive?" Sally was thinking of herself and how in spite of her evident popularity, she was getting nowhere. Twenty-eight pretty soon, and all those fellows ready for fun at all times, but no more. She must adopt new tactics, she must.

Suddenly she went out on the porch. "Come out here, boys," she called, and a new alluring note was in her voice. "Come and look at the moon! Pete, don't you think she is beautiful?"

Dalagang Bundok *

Dawn bursts the tropic night,
The barrio wakes—
Mangy dogs and scurrying pigs,
Harsh choruses of fowls;
Querulous voices dominate the Bedlam.

But along the mountain trail
Through the loitering
Sweetness of the night
Comes the market girl—
Basket lightly poised on head,
Unhurried movement,
Sinuous, swift;
No eyes need guide her dewy feet,
Sure as the forest creature's
In the rugged path.

She nears,
She turns a placid golden face
With eyes of shadowed pools,
And smiles, and passes on:
All vigorous grace,
Lithe hips and sculptured limbs,
Breasts at the bud of maidenhood,
Lips of sensuous roundness
And guileless innocence—
What harmony of color and of motion!

—R. F. WENDOVER.

* Mountain Girl.

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