



"Thy Kingdom come!"

be imagined, especially as, when the ward had quieted down at about nine, and lights were turned off, distant shouts, whoops and screams kept me awake. It required a second sedative to put me to sleep.

All that day, as I lay in bed, satisfied that I was being cared for, I had been annoyed by a man clad in a red and white striped bath robe who would stop in front of my door and peer in at me, sometimes glaring wildly, again grinning. As a matter of fact there were several such men—patients able to be up—but to me, as in the case of the two nurses, there was but one. In the morning, however, while waiting for my breakfast, I was able to differentiate; I at least knew a black man from a white, and when a sad-faced man-and-brother looked in at me I knew it was not the ill-bred person of the day before, even though he wore a striped bath robe.

**B**UT my new visitor went him one better. As he stared at my recumbent figure the sadness left his face; it took on a wide, delighted smile; then he began to laugh, softly at first, then unrestrainedly. Nodding and wagging his head, his eyes half closed and his mouth wide open, he backed away from my door, and his laughter died away as he went down the ward. No doubt he was happy—and I like to make people happy; but I do not like to be

laughed at. Sensitiveness to ridicule has always been my pet weakness, and I felt humiliated and hurt.

Again that sad, sombre countenance appeared at my door; again it expanded to a huge smile, and broke into fragments as his joyous laughter rang out. He backed away again, apparently unable to stand the sight of me, and I began to be annoyed. I had no mirror at hand, but I looked at my shoulders, arms and hands—all that I could see of myself. There was nothing to laugh at, I thought. But he came again, looked me over, and as he began to chuckle I felt my hair tingle down to the back of my neck.

"What are you laughing at?" I demanded.

"I'se laughin' at you, boss," he answered, his smile still with him, but in a state of arrested development.

"What's wrong with me?"

"I dunno, boss, but I jess got to laugh at you, sub. You look so funny."

"Get to h—l away out of this," I yelled, "or I'll beat your brains out with this pillow." I sat up and grabbed the pillow, the only missile at hand,—not a very hard pillow, but not so soft, I felt, as his brain. He backed away with a frightened look in his face, and I never saw him again. But he had given me something to think about.

"Softening of the brain," I said to myself, as I sank back, shaking in every limb from the excitement. Then I remembered the shrieks and screams of the day before, and when one of the night nurses appeared with my breakfast I asked her where I was.

"The Psychopathic Ward," she answered. "Didn't you know?"

So, I had come to my Kingdom at last. I was in the famous, or—as I had always thought—the infamous Psychopathic Ward of Bellevue Hospital, the place where sane men were incarcerated for trivial reasons and driven insane by the environment and treatment. Did the darkness of desolation and despair close down on my soul? Not a bit. I was used to the thought, and had merely forgotten it recently in view of my physical condition. I felt that my life's work was done, and that while I had not rounded out my life by forgiving all my enemies and paying all my debts, this might be condoned in consideration of the energy I had expended and the penalty I had paid. The Medical Superintendent had diagnosed my case correctly, and placed me where I belonged—in a madhouse, to die. And they were all good to me because I was doomed. So, I was content; but I *did* want a smoke.

**A**FTER breakfast the day watch came on; and the nurse appeared with her arms full of sheets and pillow slips, and turned me out of bed. "Go out in the ward," she said, "and walk up and down a little, while I change the sheets. Clean sheets every morning, here." I obeyed her, and had the first good look at the place where I expected to end my days. It was about a hundred feet long and sixteen wide, bordered, as I have said, by rooms, five of which were reading room, linen room, lavatory, kitchen and bathroom, the rest sleeping rooms, each containing two beds. Running down the center of the ward was an eight foot wide length of fiber which, like the hard wood borders, was given a dancing floor polish with floor wax. About twenty patients, all clad in striped bath robes, pajamas and slippers, were cleaning up, sweeping and dusting, under the direction of the male nurses, or orderlies. A few were pushing square castings padded on the under side back and forth from end to end of the ward, polishing that more than slippery fiber mat. I thought this was merely to exercise the patients, as nothing, it seemed, could improve the polish. A few eyes were staring or glaring, a few faces were twitching, and some of the workers muttered unintelligibly; but there was no conversation. It was a depressing spectacle and I returned to my room where I found that my nurse now had an assistant, a middle-aged, very effeminate person, who chattered volubly and seemed to hamper her more than help her.

"Anything I can do?" I asked, weakly, yet willing to be of use.

"Yes," she answered, with a smile. "You can lie right down on this bed and stay there. I'll cover you up."

**S**HE chased the sissy out, and I stretched myself on the bed. She spread the bed clothing over me, arranged the pillows carefully, and tucked me in. The situation brought back memories of my childhood, and as I looked up at her pleasant, sunny face I almost involuntarily uttered the word "Mother." She smiled down on me, patted my cheek and left me. "Mother" was my name for her after that. I could not pronounce her real name, and had to call her something. She deserves to be a mother—a happy mother, too.

But the utterance of the word "mother" threw me into a mood unknown for years, and soon the tears came, hot, copious and scalding, streaming down my cheeks in two steady currents and wetting the pillow. I shifted my head, and then turned the pillow, but not until the slip was soaked did the flood cease. Then, ashamed of the weakness, I traded pillows with the other bed, and when "mother" came back with medicine she did not notice. But the tears did me good. I know several other rough-necks who would benefit by a few tears, brought on, preferably, by physical distress.

I slept most of that day, and was wakened by the little Chief Mate, who brought me my supper and gave me a name—one that I liked. I have been called several different kinds of names in my journey through this life, but I never liked them and never accepted them. (Continued on Page 11)



"Why," I gasped, "am I all right—all right in my head?"

that encompassed at least two octaves in ordinary conversation, and when used in accents of command—for she was head nurse, though the youngest of all—held a carrying power that sent it to every corner of the ward and adjoining rooms. When able to get up and watch her at her duties I called her the Chief Mate—mentally.

When she had given me my sixth and last tablet on that first day she took me by the hand. It was always pleasant to hold a girl's hand, but this experience was especially so. A delicious, tingling thrill went up my arm, and I reached for her other hand, to hold that, too; but she forestalled me by clasping me gently by the wrist, while she smiled at me. I did not know then that this gentle hand clasp was a jiu jitsu grip that would have dislocated my shoulder had I deserved it; but I did not deserve it. Some inner consciousness had always protected me in such emergencies, and I remained quiescent with one small hand in my loosening fingers and the other around my wrist. Then I seemed floating away in the air, and when I wakened the supper dishes were rattling, and I was steady of nerve, rested and ravenous. With a smile and a hand clasp she had given me nearly three hours of blessed sleep.

**W**HAT is this marvelous power or emanation from one human being to another which has been called mesmerism, animal magnetism, odic force, and seems to be the basic law of all the New Thought cults? It is stronger than hypnotism, for it does not demand the consent of the subject. Once, in a Turkish bath, a big, red-headed Irishman laid me out to rub me down. He had a low, retreating forehead, a brutal face, and apparently just enough of intelligence to hold his job. He rubbed, kneaded, punched and thumped me. He hurt me; I thought I could feel my ribs cracking and my joints uncoupling, yet I could not utter a word in protest, and finally under his painful manipulations sank into unconsciousness, and was aroused by the cold shower when he had finished. Whatever this mysterious force is, that big brute possessed it in common with this gentle, delicate girl.

But she did not use it on me again. That evening the doctors went the rounds and I was put under regular treatment, which included sedatives. I asked for a smoke, and was told that, when able to get up I could go outdoors and smoke, but not in the ward. As for thirty-five years my pipe, practically, had never grown cold, my craving for a smoke may