

Hebrides to Samoa with a cargo of black labor, was lying becaimed upon a sea of glass, with the pitch bubbling up between its deck seams. Ten miles away to the eastward the verdured slopes of two islands-Fotuna and Alofi-which an hour before had shown a vivid and enchanting green, were now changing to a dulled pur-

E Montlara, barque, of Sydney, from the New

ple under the last rays of an angry, blood red sun. As four bells struck John Maudsley, the chief mate, came up on deck from the main hold and, walking quickly aft, joined the captain on the poop.

"Packenham," he said wearily, as he took off his broad straw hat and fanned his heated face, "there's another poor devil just pegged out-one of the Santa Cruz boys. Thirteen in twenty-one days! and unless we get a breeze soon they'll begin to die like rotten sheep. Look here, old man, it's no use talking, we must let a batch of sny thirty up on deck at once. It will at least give the rest some more air."

The two men looked into each other's faces for a few moments in silence, then Packenham spoke.

"It's terribly risky, Maudsley. There are only three sound men in the ship besides you and I, and it would simply be asking those Tanna and Pentecost niggers to cut our throats and take the ship. What chance should we have, old man, with even only a dozen of them if they knew out weakness? Can't you get the sick men to come up on deck?" "No. They are sulky and savage, and would rather die down there with suffocation. There are now quite half a dozen of them sickening. Tried to get one fellow up on his feet to bring him on deck, but his countrymen looked so threateningly at me that I had to desist."

" Any of the Tanna and Pentecost boys sick yet?"

'No; it would be a deuced good thing for us if they were. They're the crowd who are bent on mischief. So far only the Banks islanders have been attacked, and they are the least dangerous of the lot. Something must be done, Packenham. Always thought measles was a baby's complaint, didn't you? I say, old man, look out for the deck for a bit and send for some coffee. I've got a bit of a twister coming on. O, this is a lovely trip! All hands but five down with fever, measles among the ' cargo '-the greater portion of which is only walting its chance to cut our throats; and a beastly, furious calm to boot."

'Steward, bring some coffee, quick," cried Packenham, as Maudsley, with chattering tooth and shaking limbs, grawled up between the upended wings of the skylight, and tawing his knees to his chest, lay down on his side, whilst te captain hastily covered him with rugs and blankets undil the ague fit was past and the bone wracking agonles of the fever began.

The steward brought the coffee, and Maudsley raised imself on his elbow and caught sight of the captain standg over him.

'Hang you, Packenham, what the devil are you doing re?" he chattered, in querulous, irritable tones; "I'm all ht. You go and get that 'tween deck ladder up-if the rs mean to make a rush one man with a gun won't em. Take a look below first, and see what they're

bright light of myriad stars the little barque glided over the silent sea.

An hour before the dawn Maudaley, who was feeling better, had taken the wheel, whilst Packenham and the others were ranging the cable ready for anchoring. The clang and thump of the heavy iron links as they fell on deck seemed. to put new life into the crew, and even those lying sick It the house came out into the cooling morning air, and with weakened arms and trembling knees helped to fiake the chain along, ship shape,

Just as they had finished, and as the first yellow lights of the rising sun were dispersing the thick mists of Schouten mountains on Fotuna island, the steward came softly up to Maudsley and touched his arm.

"The second mate is dead, sir."

Maudsley's hands gripped the spokes of the wheel tightly, and then he ran his eye aloft before he answered. " Was he conscious, steward?"

'Yes, sir he was-just at the last. He arst fur you, sir, an' when I told 'im that you was at the wheel, an' the skipper an' the reat of the hands were gettin' ready for anchorin', he say to me, 'Don't call the mate, steward, but tell' im as there's a letter under my piller for some one as he's a-heard



me a-speakin' of.' An' without another word, sir, he turns or: his side, an' dies nice and quiet." " All right, steward. Go below and get me a stiff glass of brandy. And, look, while I think of it, put that letter of Mr. Leiton's in the captain's cabin. Hurry up now, you little ecckney swab, and bring me that brandy-I want it."

as many more had been hurled below, and the rest, when they saw Packenham cut down two of their number and the toatswaln smash the skull of a third with the butt of his carbine, turned and iled for and. Some of them ran up the fore rigging, and these were picked off one by one by Tommy Samoa and the other seamen when Maudsley struck their weapons from their hands and flercely bade them cease such useless slaughter.

"On with the hatches," he said pantingly, as he stooped over the coamings and pulled up the ladder the natives has placed in position-a mere bamboo pole with half a dozen cross pieces lashed to it with cinnet-" on with the hatches, They'll give in now, but we must take no further risks, and there must be no more of this bloody work."

As the hatches were being put on Maudsley leant over and looked at the savages below. They had all gathered as far aft as possible, believing that the white men, now daylight had come, would open fire on them.

Maudsley bade them to remain quiet; their lives would spared, he said, if they obeyed him. Then he called to those of their number who were aloft, and told them to come nown and go below. They stared at him sullenly and refused. "Then stay there, you brutes," he said with a curse; 'they can't hurt us, Packenham, up there. Now let us get to anchor.

A cut from a tomahawk had laid open his check, and Packenham, who himself had a knife thrust in the arm, quickly bound it up, and then Maudsley again went aft to the wheel and brought the barque to anchor under a high wooded bluff on the western point of Alofi Island and in water as calm as that of a mountain lake. The bodies of the dead natives were then thrown overboard, and that of the white sollor carried aft and laid beside the second mate's cabin. Then, when those of the crew who had been wounded had had their hurts attended to by captain and steward, the ensanguined decks were washed down, conce and biscuits were served out, and Maudaley went for and again urged the

'Tanna men who were aloft to come down. ' If we are to die, we can die here," was their sullen

unswer. The white man was losing patience, the wound on his face made him feel sick and faint, and a sudden spasm of

ague shook his frame. He took his pistol from his belt. " I promise you that no harm shall be done to you if you come down guickly and go into the hold with your country-

men. Have I ever lied to you?" "No," replied the oldest man of the four-a wild eyed, vicious faced brute, with his hair twisted into countless tiny

curls, which hung in a greasy tangle down his neck. "Then do as I bld you, or I shall kill you from where

I stand-quick!" and he raised his right hand. Slowly and suspiciously they descended, still grasping their blood stained knives and tomahawks. As they reached the deck they stopped and glared about them with the ferocity and fear of hunted boars.

"Keep back there, men," said Maudsley to the crew, who were standing near the mainhatch, "they'll want a bit of coaxing. Hang a line over the for'ard end of the haten so that they can get down." Then putting his revolver back into its pouch, he unbuckled the belt and laid it down on the windlass,

"Now, come with me, men of Tanna," he said quietly, " no one shall hurt you. See, I hold no weapon in my hand, and the rest of the white men, too, have laid down their guns." Beckoning to them to follow, he walked to the hatchway, then turned and faced them.

'Now listen. Take hold of the rope and go down one by one. And tell your countrymen and the men of Pentecost that if they sit down quictly until the sun is high in the sky they shall have food and water given them. Then when all the badness is out of their minds they shall come on deck, ten at a time, and the smell of blood will no longer be in our nostrils. But before food and water is given every tomahawk and every club must be brought on deck to me by two men, Now give me these," and he reached his hands out for the weapons they themselves carried.

Two heavy butcher knives and one tomahawk were, after a little hesitation, given up, and were at once thrown over the side, and the three disarmed savages went below; fourth man still clutched his tomahawk tightly. the

Come, be quick," said Maudsley, "give it to me." 'Take it, white men!" and the native, swinging the keen edged weapon swiftly above his head, struck it deep into the officer's side, and with a yell of triumph he sprang over the side and swam for the shore-only to throw up his arms and sink, as Packenham sent a bullet through his head before

The steward disappeared without a word, and soon came en deck again with half a tumbierful of liquor. The chief mate, his hand now quite steady, took the glass.

Thank you, steward. You're no cockney swab, but a good little chap. There's a \$20 gold piece in the top afterdrawer of my locker-that's for you. You see I've got the fiver pretty bad this time, and as like as not I'll slip my cable-you know what that means, my borough road fried figh eating friend, don't you, though you're no sailor man? Sometimes it means going to hell suddenly instead of having a parson to 'ready ' you up for it, though as like as not he'lt tell you that you'll appear as white as snow before the throne. Clear out, hang you! What the devil are you staring at? the skipper will want his coffee presently." The steward, an under sized, bent shouldered old man, placed his hand on the edge of the skylight and looked into Maudsley's face.

If it wasn't murder to do so in such weather I'd clap the hatches on."

The skipper of the Montlara was well used to his mate's language, for the two men were old and tried comrades; and in all matters concerning natives Packenham always gave way to his subordinate; for Maudsley was not only his chief officer but "recruiter" as well, and no man who ever salled the Pacific had more nerve and a greater knowledge of native custom and character, nor had displayed it so often in the face of the deadliest danger.

Packenham walked along to the main deck and looked down the hatchway, but the fast gathering darkness prevented him from discerning more than the recumbent figures of his "cargo," with here and there the gleam of a surreptitious pipe or a cigaret of negrohead tobacco rolled in a dried banana leaf. A sallor, armed with a revolver and cutlass, was pacing to and fro across the for'ard end of the hatchway, and presently Packenham motioned him to haut up the light ladder. This was done without noise; and then the captain went to the deckhouse, and, putting his head in at the door, addressed the occupants (six A. B.s) which it contained.

"Here, I say, you fellows, can't you shake off a bit of fever? Why, there's the mate, who is worse than any of you, and whose teeth are going like a cotton gin at full speed, dancing a jig on the poop to himself. Come, buck up, my lada."

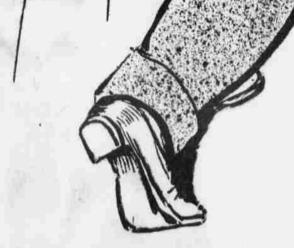
Then raising the lamp he surveyed the place, examined the men's carbines and pistols, and then went on his usual nightly round along the deck of the disease smitten ship. Ten minutes later he rejoined Maudsley, who was now sitting up, clad only in his pyjama trousers, and pressing his throbbing head between his hands as the fever ran fiercely through rate." his boiling veins.

"Pack!" he began excitedly, "there's a bit of an air up aloft. Look over the side and you'll see we're moving. Does It stir, Harry?"

"No, sir, not yet," answered the helmsman

Packenham looked aloft, and then over the side,

You're right, Maudsley, a breeze is coming sure enough, and a breeze means everything to us; we can run into Singavi bay on Fotuna. One of the two French priests there



is a doctor, and we can put the sick people ashore at any

Maudsley gave an irritated laugh. Don't be a fool. I know you're not a brute; but why the deuce don't you think of what you're saying? There's a thousand natives on Fotuna, and it would be a low down, dirty thing for us to do to dump these measly brutes of ours among them. If we did, the chances are that there wouldn't be another native left alive on the island in a month. Now, this is my idea; if we can get up under the ice of Alofi we can anchor. There is no one living there-at least that I

for their yam plantations, and they seldom go there. There's good holding ground under the west point-ten miles away from Fotuna." Packenham nodded. "I see; go ahead."

know of-as the island is only used by the Fotuna people

"Well as soon as we get there let us land the whole lot-Tanna boys, Pentecost boys, and the Banks islanders. Plenty of coccanuts, yams, and taro, and, above all, a fine stream of running water. They'll be as right as rain there; and then while you and the hands disinfect the hold and the rest of the ship I'll start off for Singavi in the boat with a couple of hands and see if the French priest-the medicine man fellow-will come back with me. By heaven, Pack, he'll have to come. We mustn't let these poor fellows die like retten sheep. And I dare say he can give us some quinine for the hands; the last was used yesterday."

Look here, Maudsley; you give the word, and I'll do whatever you say must be done. Hurrah! here's the breeze now, and no mistake-but nearly dead ahead."

Never mind that," said Maudsley, languidly; "we can't pick up the anchorage tonight, but we'll be near enough at daylight. Try and fix that windsail, Pack, so that some of this cool breeze goes down into the hold."

Packenham, with the three seamen who were able to work, and the steward, set to and trimmed the salls, and under the

"You're ill, sir. I can see that. Can't I call one of the hands, sir, to take the wheel?"

" No, you can't. Go below and get that \$20 piece and stow it away-and clap a stopper on your jaw tackle, you silly old the dying man and took his hand. feel!"

Presently Packenham came aft, and stood beside him. We're all ready for'ard, Maudy."

"Right you are, Pack. We'll go about presently; another half hour will bring us close enough, I think, though I can't see where we are well as yet. Take a cast of the lead, will you, old man, as soon as we are in stays? O, God! Look there!" and he sprang down off to the main hatch and tried to beat back the upward rush of three score or more of nakea savages with his clenched fists.

Packenham and the three seamen ran to his aid, and then began a deadly struggle-the white men trying to hurl back the savages into the hold instead of using their revolvers. But in less than ten seconds one of the sallors was thrown down upon his back and his brains dashed out with a tomahawk; then, and not till then, was a shot fired. Packenham westward?" was the first to bring his pistol into play, and none too soon, for a huge Tanna man had seized him by the beard with his left hand and in another moment would have driven a knife into his heart. The sharp crack of the revolver was forlowed by another and another, and each time a native went mighty effort he half raised himself. down; then came the loud reports of the seamen's carbines, and the lust of slaughter had seized upon them all, as, flinging aside their firearms, they drew their heavy cutiasses and slashed, and cut, and stabbed the naked figures of the now maddened islanders. Up to this time not more than thirty had succeeded in actually gaining the deck by means of the ladder they had so cunningly made and placed in posttion, and of these eight or ten were lying either dead or dying,

he was twenty yards from the ship.

"I'm done for, Packenham, old man. No, don't carry me aft time's too short. There's a letter for poor Belton's girl. Pack, which you must give to her. Tell her she must forgive me for tempting him to ship on this cruise-my last cruise, old man."

Gently they lifted and carried him aft, and quickly rigged an awning, for the sun was blazing hot and fiercely upon the vessel's decks. Then Packenham, with the quick falling tears coursing down his bronzed and bearded face, knelt beside

Maudsley opened his eyes and smiled at his captain and gave a faint answering pressure. " Don't you worry, old fellow. Somehow I don't much care. But it was hard for poor Belton to die-he was a bright young shaver, and a gentleman. I've got my gruel this time, and I'm not going to make a song over it. And I'm no loss to any one."

Then in slow, labored words he told Packenham what should be done. The sick natives should be put ashore as soon as possible; the rest disarmed and kept confined till aid could be obtained from the white traders in Fotuna, who would find him native sallors to help to sail the barque to Samoa. Nothing escaped him, nothing was forgotten.

"How does it lie, bld man?" he asked presently,

Snug as possible, Jack," answered the captain brokenly. "Plenty of room to swing if the wind comes from the

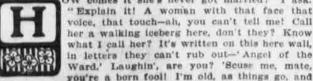
"Plenty, Jack, old man; I've sent the boat to Singavi for the French priest. It should be back by noon."

Maudsley shook his head. "I don't want any doctoring, Pack. That buck sent it home properly." Suddenly, by a

Steward, bostswain, come here; I want you fellows to witness that I have said that all money coming to me for this cruise is to be paid to Capt. Packenham." Then he sank back again and motioned to the captain to come closer. 'Jack," he whispered, "send it all to Belion's girl."

Packenham bent his head, and then Maudsley, the recruiter, gave a long, heavy sigh and closed his eyes-his last cruise was ended.

## By Robert Halifax. THE ANGEL



in letters they can't rub out-'Angel of the Ward.' Laughin', are you? 'Scuse me, mate, you're a born fool! I'm old, as things go, and I know what I know. There's a secret somewhere-a mystery with a heart still beatin' in it; and time'll bear me out."

Outside lay a deep, daskling reach of the river that wound away toward the sea and eternity. Here inside all was light hope, and warmth; subdued whisperings and low ripples of laughter came from the group of nurses at the far end of the main ward. Presumably the "angel" was not among them; the grizzled, brown old satior in the corner bed sniffed and resumed his husky, strenuous mutterings to the wide eyed young fellow in the bed adjoining.

Grimly crude, but terribly earnest, the old salt had sprung a subtlety upon the other patients.

"Your hospital nurse," he insisted with warmth, "was woman-and something infinitely more than that. What! It sounded in her steady step, in her clear, quiet voice it was the something deep in her calm eyes that could make the boldest man feel somehow less than a man." And he said this after Sister Lou had hovered over his bed for two client, burning, awful nights in succession, while fever struggled for a grip, and the pendulum swung between life and death. Unknown to her, he had noted many little facts that set him wondering whether life was what it seemed, after all. Anyway, a great knot stopped all the words in his throat, when, one cool morning, she put a hand on his forehead and whispered:

"There! Doctor says you are to have your lease renewed. Thankful? Going to make the most of it this time? No dead mother to remember?"

'Such a hand," he muttered in awe; "like a wisp o' lost snow strayed on to a gasping desert. And such a whisper, as if she read all his past and his bit of a future! As long as he lived he'd never understand why-why-she wasn't wodded, to make some man's life a paradise."

That was his queer point of view. There was another of Women dive for reasons when a man is content to bask in the more effect. The other nurses were definitely agreed that stately, silent Sister Lou had a past of her own,

comes it she's never got married?" I ask. and was living with the sole determination to forget it. They Explain it! A woman with that face that loved her at a distance-and, possibly, were jealous of her voice, that touch-ah, you can't tell me! Call giorious calm, and of the many touching little keepsakes her a walking iceberg here, don't they? Know furtively left in the lobby " for Sister Lou."

That night-that particular night, when, as they say, she came back to life-Sister Lou had been assigned to relieve

the 9 o'clock nurse in charge of the incipient fever ward. It was fifteen minutes to the hour when she came into the main ward, bathed hands and face in antiseptic fluid, donned the gown and hood that made her look like a pale nun, took her instructions in mechanical silence, and rustled down the long corridor for the night as softly as a breath of summer wind. There was just one new case, matron had said. It might mean anything or nothing; developments must be watched and recorded. All was so quiet in the building now that a sound from the world outside could be fett

Perhaps sixty seconds had elapsed when, after gauging the temperature of the main ward the matron stepped down that corridor to open a window. She paused to glance out at the river lying like a web of silver sequins in the moonlight; and in that brief moment something happened.

She heard a swift confused little rush of feet and a succession of suffocating gasps. Then one of the dividing curtains had flashed back, and was framing a never forgotten pleture. Sister Lou, her slight figure drawn up in trembling rigidity, hor face white as whitest marble, queer little sobs clicking her teeth, her wide eyes staring back as if at some thing that breathed and wailed beyond the next curtain. That suggestion, indeed, came so naturally, so vividly, that the matron swept past and found herself plucking back the folds in wonder, before she thought of asking a simple question There was nothing-nothing at all'" said Lon.

"Sister Lou!" she whispered, with chilling diguity. "I am surprised! What on earth am I to think?"

'Please forget! It was nothing-nothing " She put cut her hands and said it with what sounded almost like a panting laugh of contempt at her own feur. " Don't send me e tonight-not tonight" there

to recall a precedent, but could not do it. She looked at the white, pleading, deflant face. " Come into my private room."

"No, no; I don't wish any one to know! Let me stand here a minute; just a minute. You are a woman, too; you can nee it is real! Yes; I may be mistaken, but I thought I saw -I was-don't leave me!" the breathless gasp broke off.

You won't leave me? You won't leave me, will you?" The matron reflected, stepped back, and turned the key in the main ward door. Perhaps she understood physical agony better than mental.

"Now! I must either know, or ring up the house surgeon. You saw what? Turn your eyes away from that curtain; look straight at me!" She put her hand on the slight, shrinking shoulder. "Come, dearle; is it not time you told just one woman what shadow lies over your life? Tell metrust me

a moment more, and then came the calm-too calmwhisner:

"I loved him! I was living for him, and would have died for him! I was so happy, so sure! It almost broke my heart to let him sign away for three years more at sea, but a wouldn't let him know that. It was to be his last trip; he had promised. He was to write often; I was to be his dear wife; I had only to wait and wait; I had only to be as brave as thousands of women had been before me. He wrote -Just two letters. Think of a woman waiting all those years for a step and a voice that were never to sound! He had forgotten me; he had seen some one whose face was more beautiful than mine. That was the man who had made me love him until I lived upon the hope of his truth! He went away yet again; he had watched and waited outside in the dark, ashamed to face me and ask my forgiveness. Did he knowdid he know the white wedding dress here in its tissue paper sheets, every stitch drawn by my own fingers? He knew, at least, he had taken all the light from a woman's life. I have lived only to forget him, to hate him, to pray that I might never ace him again. Because if I saw him-The calm

breath broke off. She pointed. "And he is there!" Deepest silence, within and without, broken at last by the matron's lowered voice.

" And you have won your battle? you hate him-you can forget?"

It was part plty, part vague misgiving, that prompted the GREATION

Sister Lou had not seemed to hear. Drawn up rigidly still, she pointed along the corridor. Tragedy's own wan fingers seemed to be hollowing lines on her face as she stood.

'Forgive you?" She whispered it with quivering, nameloss scorn, as if the man's imploring glance had followed her here and put the question. "Can you-dare you ask it? Can you bring back the sunlight to my darkened life?"

The matron suddenly clutched her arm, and drew her away. It was contented, phlegmatic Sister Carrie who And for quite two hours the matron kept a careful eye on the corridor between.

It would have been close on midnight. The lights in the isolated ward were low. Only a few of the beds were eloquently humped, and sleep seemed to hold the room; Sister Carrie had thought it safe to doze and dream for five minutes, her white and plump hands folded on her lap. So no one heard the baize covered door open.

Sister Lou, in the hood and gown, stole in. Pale and calm, she looked like a woman obeying the impulse of some dream. Slowly, soundlessly, across to that bed she moved. Now she craned forward to listen to his breathing; one hand trembled out as to touch and wake him; she withdrew it with a shiver. Was he sleeping? His eyes were twitchingly closed, his fingers were drawn up and clenched on air, as it the mind had been in agony, his head rocked hopelessly on the pillow. He was a man-once it had been vouchsafed to him to find and win his true mate; and now all was lost. "Lou! Listenin' Lou?"

It came suddenly up to her the thin, strenuous breath, Only dreams! All his body was twitching convulsively now, shaken by the tense pain of regret. It might almost have seemed that a telepathic message had stirred his confused brain and prompted him to whisper that name. Sister Lou was not to know that he had been breathing some such words at intervals for hours.

"Lou! I see her there, wavin' good-by to me and tryin' to smile. Now it's gone again, Lord," he whispered to himself in dull awe, "what's her life-and what's mine? What must she think-what 'ud any woman think? I'm no good: I'd die this night if it 'ud pay for all. But who'll tell her that? Who could?"

Her hand had wavered out again, and almost touched his own, but only to be drawn back as with dread of the contact.

"Jim, Jim!" came her sob.

It was quite involuntary and meaningless. He had breathed her name-and that happened to be his, that was all, "Louie, gelf Lou! It's good-by-good-by for ever now. I'm called this tide. I'll have to up anchor and go!"

"No, no!" flashed her quick, fierce breath down in answer. " You can live, live for her-the woman who was better than relieved the wondering nurse in the isolated ward that night. me. It's nothing to me at all, I've been quite-quite happy; all the world was before me, if I wanted to forget! you're only cne man.

"O, Jim, Jim!"

Again the sob broke out, in spite of her struggle to keep it back.

Could he have heard? She held her breath in suspense. as he became suddenly still. Yes, he was listening in the fascination of doubt and rapture as a dying man might liston to loved volces calling clearer and clearer through the last great darkness of all. His finger was lifted.

"There, there!" he said. "She's calling to me. Don't move; you'll hear it. That's her-that's my Loui Takes more'n a lifetime to forget that volce! Hark! It'll come again.

Never, never! she told herself. Back close to the wall behind him she cowered, fighting the fight with her woman's heart. He had won her once to lose her.

"Ah, no!" came his dull whisper at last. "That shows Lou won't answer-she can't, it's too late. I loved the gel-I know it now as I only thought it then; but she's not to know that! Almighty knows, though-knows the price I've paid. Wasn't faithful to her, couldn't come back and look her 'tween the eyes again-not Lou's eyes! But I'd wanted her all along. I knew all afterwards. You'll tell her that; you'll sny I found out what I'd thrown away. One was love, and t'other was make believe! The dream's gone and can't be called again. Some one tell her. O, God, if some one 'ud only tell her I know now! Little Louie-my Lou! That 'good-by' night her warm arms came round my neck-ay, jest like that! And her eyes looked past me jest like panates fadin' in a mist. I'd got to go for three years. And she says to me, as the ship's hell rang, she says to me----

Contented, phlegmatic Sister Carrie suddenly sprang to attention; rubbed the treacherous sleep mist from her eyes. Why, whatever-" she began, whispering to hersen, "Who's that?"

She thought she had been dreaming. She stared ana stared, and gradually realized the strangest sight of her professional or private experience.

Sister Lou, kneeling motionless against the bed over there, both arms clasped tightly about the neck of the sleeping man-the man who was to live to let love atons for all.

"Don't send you there?" The matron racked her brains