

THE TREASURE OF TU' PENNY CAY.

BY CLARISSA MACKIE.

"Elsie," said Captain Charlie Bunce as he stumped into the house one bleak November morning. "I believe I've got a cold on my lung." He uttered a hollow cough.

"Heu!" commented his sharp tongued wife. "Which lung?" Captain Charlie coughed again, ending with an alarming strangle that required a vigorous pounding on the back from the stout fists of Mrs. Bunce.

"A vast there!" roared the captain at last. Elsie ceased her efforts. A thin smile curled her lips. "Your lungs ain't suffering none," she remarked dryly as she returned to her pumpkin pies.

"By all signs I got to look out for myself," he said, with dignity, when he got his breath. "Being as there's no one to take no interest in my health, I can go and seek a balmy climate all alone."

"What wild goose chase are you off on now?" Elsie demanded sternly. Captain Charlie blushed to his leathery little ears, but his mouth was obstinate.

"I'm going to the sunny south," he announced defiantly. "You can come along, too, if you want to." "Oh, thank you," retorted Elsie sarcastically. "I guess I'll stay at home and not go and catch malaria and yellow fever. I might as well be a wilder woman as to be deserted off and on whenever you and Lem Peters take it into your head to fit out the schooner and take a voyage."

"Me and Lem Peters has earned many a dollar carrying freights on the Rosy Dawn," replied Captain Charlie. "This time it's more than a load of potatoes or coal or oysters."

"I thought maybe I'd get to the truth of your lung trouble," said Elsie dryly. "Where you off to now?"

Given this opening, Captain Charlie launched forth into an enthusiastic description of a certain island among the Florida keys—Tu'penny cay—it was called down there—where bubbled the traditional fountain of youth, the one described by Ponce de Leon, and it developed that it was the firm intention of Messrs. Bunce and Peters to sail the schooner Rosy Dawn down to Tu'penny cay and fill innumerable bottles with the precious liquid, which was to be brought north and sold at a fabulous price to those who desired the boon of eternal youth.

"And you believe all that trash?" demanded Mrs. Bunce, ignoring the fact that her pies were burning to a crisp. "I certainly do," was Captain Charlie's firm reply. "I got so much faith in it I'm willing to risk \$50 on the venture, and Lem Peters he's going to do the same."

"Good thing that Lem's wife is a popular dressmaker," cut in Elsie. Two weeks later Captain Charlie sailed away, with Lem Peters and a negro boy as mate and crew of the Rosy Dawn. The name of the old schooner perhaps typified the many hopes cherished by her owner and master, for since his retirement from the sea Captain Bunce had led many a vain search in quest of fortune.

He had not told Elsie the most incredible part of his story. She heard it from Sadie Peters after the Rosy Dawn had sailed toward the south-land.

Besides the fountain of youth, Tu'penny cay was said to be the repository of golden treasure buried by that famous pirate, Black Duffy, just before he made his last appearance in the sensational act of walking the plank.

So the indignant Elsie wrote a letter to Captain Charlie—such a letter as that redoubtable sailor had never before received in his adventurous life—and she sent it to Savannah, which was to be the Rosy Dawn's first port of call.

Weeks passed and no word came to the two women, although Elsie subscribed to the Herald and read every word of the shipping news. Christmas came and went, and Elsie Bunce and Sadie Peters spent it together. It was not strange that the two women became very intimate, for it was their mutual desire to keep a secret hidden from their neighbors in Little Bay—the secret of their quarrels with their respective husbands and the fact that they did not correspond with them.

"So long as they was bound to go, anyway, I s'pose I might as well have let Lem go in peace," worried Sadie Peters one January day.

"If I didn't have great faith in Charlie's seamanship I'd get worried," remarked Elsie, her needles flashing dizzily.

"I'd go down myself if I hadn't said what I did to Lem," admitted Sadie. Elsie Bunce said nothing, but now she knitted so fast and so incoherently that her woofs became hopelessly tangled, which might be a token that Captain Charlie's wife was in "a state of mind."

January on Tu'penny cay. Overhead a cloudless blue sky and below a snow white coral island lapped by a blue sea. Featherly palms rustled in the spice laden breeze, and a few bright colored birds flashed among the trees.

Half hidden in a tiny lagoon was the schooner Rosy Dawn. Her sails neatly furled and smoke curling from her galley stack. Sitting on the beach smok-

ing morosely were two men. One was Captain Charlie Bunce, and the other was Lemuel Peters.

"How much did you pay that Portuguese for the information?" growled Captain Charlie after awhile.

"My job in the shipyard," admitted Lem Peters sheepishly.

There was a long silence, broken after awhile by the little captain.

"Seems like that there Portuguese sailor has got the best of the bargain," was his remark.

"I ain't got a word to say," said Lem humbly.

There wasn't much to say from the point of view of the two adventurers. They had arrived at the tiny island full of enthusiasm. The hold of the Rosy Dawn was freighted with empty gallon bottles to receive the golden flood of youth from the immortal fountain.

But unfortunately the fountain could not be located. Some inhabitants of an adjoining island laughed rudely when guardedly questioned and said the reason the little island received its disparaging name was because it was a "tu'penny sort of island." The swamp in the middle was marjorous, indeed, and, as for Black Duffy's treasure, that had been found fifty years ago by an Englishman who had the ingratitude to bestow the ignominious title upon the bit of coral rock which had made him rich.

LIVED IN SECRET ROOM

Monticello, N. Y., Startled by Discovery of Melvin Couch's Strange Companion.

The death of Melvin H. Couch, a former district attorney of Sullivan county, N. Y., revealed that, unknown to his family and friends and to his clients, a woman had lived for three years in a secret room connecting with his law offices in Monticello, N. Y. Couch was found lying dead on his office lounge.

Death was due to rupture of a blood vessel near his heart. In the next room crouched a frightened woman, who admitted that she had seen him die, but insisted that she was not responsible for his death.

She said that she was Adelaide M. Brance, of Goshen, N. Y., and that the secret room had been her only home for three years.

Mr. Couch was sixty-five years old, and was formerly partner of Alton B. Parker, Democratic nominee for the presidency in 1904.

The door that led from the office to the living quarters of the woman was always locked, and no one save Couch and his companion passed through it. She seldom left her quarters. Although Mrs. Couch was a frequent visitor at the office of her husband she never suspected what the adjoining room contained.

In the excitement attending the finding of Couch's body some one climbed upon a chair and peered through the transom into the secret room. There he saw a woman huddled up on the floor beside a plain iron bed. Her clothing was poor and ill-fitting, her face had the look like that of a drug user, and her disheveled hair was streaked with gray.

The room she occupied was sparsely furnished, containing beside the bed an old cook stove, a table and two chairs. The woman, who is about forty years old, said she had lived there voluntarily and had never gone out in the daytime. At rare intervals she went for a walk at night.

Mrs. Couch, who was present when the secret door was opened, faintly at the sight of the woman. After Adelaide Brance had been quieted and assured that no harm would come to her, she said:

"I came out of the room to waken Mr. Couch, who often slept in his office. As soon as I saw him I knew he was dead. I knew that Dr. J. F. Curlette was his brother-in-law, and I telephoned to him to come at once."

She said she met Couch three years ago, when she called at his office to sell books. The lawyer's friends remember that about this time he had the room where she was found cut off from his office by a heavy partition.

The woman was held on a technical charge, but the coroner's verdict as to the cause of Couch's death supported her assertion that she was not responsible. The attorney, she said, died of a ruptured blood vessel on Sunday morning. The autopsy brought the verdict that death was due to the breaking of the ascending aorta.

Mrs. Couch had not the slightest idea of her husband's double life, nor had his son or his daughter, said to be engaged to a young professional man of Monticello.

Mrs. Couch knew that her husband had forbidden her the locked door in his office, and that he often slept there, alleging insomnia, but she had no suspicions.

Takes Nap on Slanting Roof. Henry Surman, a tinsmith, of Burlington, N. J., naturally felt pretty sleepy after he had worked for forty hours without so much as a wink.

That was why he scared a half-hundred spectators and nearly spelled his own destruction by selecting the edge of a slanting roof as a couch.

Surman was working with several other tinsmiths on the roof of a building at Broad and Stacy streets. He was doing some soldering along the edge, and the job required him to stretch out. In such a position he dozed and his soldering iron rolled off and nearly hit a pedestrian below.

For several minutes Surman slept. Soon he began to get restless. It was then that one of the other workmen saw his predicament from ten to fifteen feet away. He was afraid to yell for fear the unconscious man might start enough to roll him off. Also he knew the worst might happen any moment and mean not only the death of the sleeper, but perhaps to somebody below.

Throwing a handful of gravel to the pavement to attract attention without shouting, he waved and pointed in a way that made those who looked understand the danger. They fell back in hushed suspense, while the workman, John Tilghman, worked his way along the edge and effected a rescue.

Surman rubbed his eyes as the crowd cheered, and then looking about him, he nervously breathed a heavy "Phew!"

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The young woman was returning from her work. At a lonely point near the town the highwayman jumped from behind a tree and ordered her to halt. He grasped her arm, and when Miss Keller courageously tried to fight him off, jabbed her with the needle.

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