

measure, and poor Teddy found that form of insult peculiarly maddening to him in his helpless condition. The plates were round, ready for tea, and Teddy had flung his plate at the offender, in the first throb of passion. It fell short and smashed on the knob of the bedstead, and No. 4 laughed and said, "Why don't you aim straight?" And poor Teddy, who had nothing else to throw, felt so dreadfully miserable that he did not know what to do with himself. Ted dared not trust himself to speak to No. 4 after that day, for fear No. 4 should insult him again and make it imperative on his (Ted's) part to throw something else at him.

Sometimes, after a sharp attack of pain, Ted would half think, half dream about it at night. And then the wicked thought of throwing his tea, his nice, warm, milky tea, over No. 4, would suggest itself to his mind. Ted never encouraged the thought, but it would obtrude its ugly self upon him at times. He would bury his face in the pillow to avoid it, but it wasn't a bit of good, for there, down beyond the pillow, and the bed, and the floor, the boy would stand in glowing light that it was impossible to shut out, in his shirt, dripping milky tea: dripping and dripping till Ted longed to cry out that his mug couldn't have held all that. And the miserable sense of guilt and apprehension would grow upon him till it would wake him at last; and then in the blessed relief of knowing that he had not done it, he would laugh, and feel what a nice warm lesson it would be to the little beast.

But Teddy did not mean to do it. He wanted with all his heart to keep from doing things to No. 4, because on the day that he threw the plate, Sister had come and talked to him seriously, very seriously. And when she sat on the side of the bed, and stroked his thin hand so gently, and looked away while she talked, and seemed so sorry, something welled up inside him so dreadfully that somehow he could not be hard any longer, and knew quite well how sorry he really was. He longed to bury his head in the clothes, and sob it all out, and ask her to forgive him. But all the ward looked up to him in a way, and if he cried now he would be humiliated for ever and could never be happy again. But Sister saw how the floods were rising over his soul, and she knew his fear. So she stood up suddenly and held out her hand to him, just as if he were a grown-up man. "Let us shake hands, Ted," she said, almost appealingly, "and we won't let it happen again, will we?"

Ted made a mighty effort to speak, but it was only just sufficient to hold the sobs back, and to enable him to say, in a whisper, "No, we won't."

But his hot little hand gripped hers, bringing

a look into Sister's face that Ted never forgot.

"Ted," she said, bending low, "if you weren't the man of the ward, and I the Sister, I should kiss you."

Then Ted heaved a blissful sigh, and pressing the palms of his thin hands together laid them contentedly under his hollow cheek.

It was evening, and the children were all asleep. The gas was low, and Nurse was kneeling before the guard, gazing into the fire.

"Nurse," called Teddy, very softly.

She came on tiptoe. "Yes, Teddy?"

"Has Sister gone yet?"

"I think she is in the kitchen, Ted. Do you want her? Is it anything I can do?"

"No thank you, Nursie. I want her, please."

"I'll tell her, Ted."

Sister had gone to her room; she was very tired, but she came.

"What is it, Teddy?" she asked.

"Come close, Sister, I want you."

"Do you, little man?" she asked, wondering a little, for he seemed to have some trouble in making his wants known, and his eyes were strangely luminous.

"All the children are asleep, Sister," he whispered. "Does it matter now—about me being the man of the ward, and you the Sister? Now that the children are asleep you can kiss me, can't you?"

Then Sister slid her arm under his shoulders and cuddled him up without a word.

Ted sighed and smiled blissfully, stealing a thin arm round her neck and there was silence in the ward for long minutes.

"Ted," she whispered reluctantly at last, "the night nurses are coming, and they won't have me here. I must go. Good-night, Teddy dear. God bless you."

As she withdrew her arm he passed his hot little hand across his cheek. "Wet!" he said, with comical bewilderment, "somebody's crying, and it ain't me!"

Sister laughed suspiciously.

"Are you crying because my leg is bad, Sister?" he whispered, fondling her hand.

"Perhaps I was, dear: I wish it would get better. I don't like to go to bed sound and whole and think of you, poor little soul."

"I like you to cry about me, it is so nice and comfortable," he whispered, nestling into the pillow as though he were hugging the thought. "Now I can think about it in the night, and not mind the pain so much; and in the morning no one will know, and it will be *our* secret, won't it? Good-night, Sister. Don't tell the others, and don't cry any more. I'm sleepy now because I feel so happy."

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