Evening World

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Daily Magazine

A DUEL

By Guy de Maupassant

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THE war was over. The Germans occupied France. The whole country was pulsating like a conquered wrestler beneath the knee of his victorious opponent.

The first trains from Paris, distracted, starving, despairing Paris, were making their way to the new frontiers, slowly passing through the country districts and the villages. The passengers gazed through the windows at the ravaged fields and burned hamlets. Prussian soldiers, in their black helmets with brass spikes, were smoking their pipes astride their chairs in front of the houses which were still left standing. Others were working or talking just as if they were members of the families. As you passed through the different towns you saw entire regiments drilling in the squares, and, in spite of the rumble of the carriage wheels, you could every moment hear the hoarse words of command.

M. Dubuis, who during the entire siege had served as one of the National Guard in Paris, was going to join his wife and daughter, whom he had prudently sent away to Switzerland before the invasion.

Famine and hardship had not diminished his big paunch so characteristic of the rich, peace-loving merchant. He had gone through the ter-

Guy de Maupassant

rible events of the past year with sorrowful resignation and bitter complaints at the savagery of men. Now that he was journeying to the frontier at the close of the war he saw the Prusians for the first time, although he had done his duty on the ramparts and mounted guard on many a cold night.

He stared with mingled fear and anger at those bearded, armed men, installed all over French soil as if they were at home, and he felt in his soul a kind of fever of impotent patriotism, at the same time also the great need of that new instinct of prudence which since then has never left us. In the same railway carriage were two Englishmen, who had come to the country as sightseers and were gazing about them with looks of quiet curiosity. They were both also stout, and kept chatting in their own language, sometimes referring to their guide book and reading aloud the names of the places indicated.

Suddenly the train stopped at a little village station, and a Prussian officer jumped up with a great clatter of his sabre on the double footboard of the railway carriage. He was tall, wore a tight-fitting uniform and had whiskers up to his eyes. His red hair seemed to be on fire and his long mustache, of a paler hue, stuck out on both sides of his face, which it seemed to cut in two.

The Englishmen at once began staring at him with smiles of newly awakened interest, while M. Dubuis made a show of reading a newspaper. He sat concealed in his corner like a thief in presence of a gendarme.

The train started again. The Englishmen went on chatting and looking out for the exact scene of different battles; and all of a sudden, as one of them stretched out his arm toward the horizon as he pointed out a village, the Prussian officer remarked in French, extending his long legs and lolling backward:

"I killed a dozen Frenchmen in that village and took more than a hundred prisoners."

The Englishmen, quite interested, immediately asked:

"Ha! and what is the name of this village?"

The Prussian replied:

"Pharsbourg." He added: "We caught those French scoundrels by the ears."

And he glanced toward M. Dubuis, laughing conceitedly into his mustache.

The train rolled on, still passing through hamlets occupied by the victorious army. German soldiers could be seen along the roads, on the edges of fields, standing in front of gates or chatting outside cafes. They covered the soil like African locusts.

The officer said, with a wave of his hand:

"If I had been in command I'd have taken Paris, burned everything, killed everybody. No more France!"

The Englishman, through politeness, replied simply:

"Ah, yes."

He went on:

"Twenty years all Europe, all of it, will belong to us. Prussia is more than a match for all of them."

The Englishmen, getting uneasy, no longer replied. Their faces, which had become impassive, seemed made of wax behind their long whiskers. Then the Prussian officer began to laugh. And still, lolling back, he began to sneer. He sneered at the downfall of France, insulted the prostrate enemy; he sneered at Austria, which had been recently conquered; he sneered at the valiant but fruitless defense of the departments; he sneered at the Garde Mobile and at the useless artillery. He announced that Bismarck was going to build a city of iron with the captured cannon. And suddenly he placed his boots against the thigh of M. Dubuis, who turned away his eyes, reddening to the roots of his hair.

THE Englishmen seemed to have become indifferent to all that was going on, as if they were suddenly shut up in their own island, far from the din of the world.

The officer took out his pipe, and looking fixedly at the Frenchman, said:

"You haven't any tobacco—have you?"

M. Dubuis replied:

"No, monsieur."

The German resumed:

"You might go and buy some for me when the train stops."

And he began laughing afresh as he added:

"I'll give you the price of a drink."

The train whistled and slackened its pace. They passed a station that had been burned down; and then they stopped altogether.

The German opened the carriage door and, catching M. Dubuis by the arm, said:

"Go and do what I told you—quick, quick!"

A Prussian detachment occupied the station. Other soldiers were standing behind wooden gratings, looking on. The engine was getting up steam before starting off again. Then M. Dubuis hurriedly jumped on the platform and, in spite of the warnings of the station master, dashed into the adjoining compartment.

He was alone! He tore open his waistcoat, his heart was beating so rapidly, and, gasping for breath, he wiped the perspiration from his forehead.

The train drew up at another station. And suddenly the officer appeared at the carriage door and jumped in, followed close behind by the two Englishmen, who were impelled by curiosity. The German sat facing the Frenchman, and, laughing still, said:

"You did not want to do what I asked you?"

M. Dubuis replied:

"No, monsieur."

The train had just left the station. The officer said:

"I'll cut off your mustache to fill my pipe with."

And he put out his hand toward the Frenchman's face.

The Englishmen stared at them, retaining their previous impassive manner.

THE German had already pulled out a few hairs, and was still tugging at the mustache when M. Dubuis, with a back stroke of his hand, flung aside the officer's arm, and, seizing him by the collar, threw him down on the seat. Then, excited to a pitch of fury, his temples swollen and his eyes glaring, he kept throttling the officer with one hand, while with the other clenched he began to strike him violent blows in the face. The Prussian struggled, tried to draw his sword, to clinch with his adversary, who was on top of him. But M. Dubuis crushed him with his enormous weight and kept punching him without taking breath or knowing where his blows fell. Blood flowed down the face of the German, who, choking and with a rattling in his throat, spat out his broken teeth and vainly strove to shake off this infuriated man who was killing him.

The Englishmen had got on their feet and came closer in order to see better. They remained standing, full of mirth and curiosity, ready to bet for or against either combatant.

Suddenly M. Dubuis, exhausted by his violent efforts, rose and resumed his seat without uttering a word.

The Prussian did not attack him, for the savage assault had terrified and astonished the officer as well as causing him suffering. When he was able to breathe freely he said:

"Unless you give me satisfaction with pistols I will kill you."

M. Dubuis replied:

"Whenever you like. I'm quite ready."

The German said:

"Here is the town of Strasbourg. I'll get two officers to be my seconds, and there will be time before the train leaves the station."

M. Dubuis, who was puffing as hard as the engines, said to the Englishmen:

"Will you be my seconds?" They both answered together:

"Oh, yes!"

And the train stopped.

In a minute the Prussian had found two comrades, who brought pistols, and they made their way toward the ramparts.

The Englishmen were continually looking at their watches, shuffling their feet and hurrying on with the preparations, uneasy lest they should be too late for the train.

M. Dubuis had never fired a pistol in his life.

They made him stand twenty paces away from his enemy. He was asked:

"Are you ready?"

While he was answering, "Yes, Monsieur," he noticed that one of the Englishmen had opened his umbrella in order to keep off the rays of the sun.

A voice gave the signal:

"Fire!"

Mr. Dubuis fired at random without delay, and he was amazed to see the Prussian opposite him stagger, lift up his arms and fall forward, dead. He had killed the officer.

One of the Englishmen exclaimed: "Ah!" He was quivering with delight, with satisfied curiosity and joyous impatience. The other, who still kept his watch in his hand, seized M. Dubuis's arm and hurried him in double-quick time toward the station, his fellow-countryman marking time as he ran beside them, with closed fists, his elbows at his side, "One, two; one, two!"

And all three, running abreast rapidly, made their way to the station like three grotesque figures in a comic newspaper.

The train was on the point of starting. They sprang into their carriage. Then the Englishmen, taking off their travelling caps, waved them three times over their heads, exclaiming:

"Hip! hip! hip! hurrah!"

And gravely, one after the other, they extended their right hands to M. Dubuis and then went back and sat down in their own corner.

ANOTHER STORY NEXT SATURDAY

Can You Beat It!

Copyright, 1918, by The Press Publishing Co. (The New York Evening World.)

By Maurice Ketten

The Evening World's Kiddie Klub Korner

Conducted by Eleanor Schorer

Copyright, 1918, by The Press Publishing Co. (The New York Evening World).

By ARNOLD FELDMAN, aged eleven years, Brooklyn, September contest award winner.

Cousin Eleanor's Klub Kolumn

My Dear Cousins:

THESE days we have become more attached to "Buster" or "Rover" or whatever we happen to call our faithful old family pet. We appreciate our dogs and all their kind more because of the splendid work they have been doing with the armies abroad.

Perhaps we have even been a bit more tolerant of the "coo-coo-coo" of the pigeons nesting in the nearby church since the service of pigeons as messengers has become well known. But did you ever think of being more lenient with a pet Polly, who loves to squawk, because of the part parrots play in gaining our victory?

To tell the truth I did not know that those noisy, gay chatterers had helped any; did you? Yet they have done their bit with the rest of us.

Early in the war the French stationed parrots as sentinels in the Eiffel Tower. There, high, high above the sleeping city, they listened for the approaching enemy. Their sharp ears caught the sound of a Boche or a Zeppelin long before human ears could hear them. At the noise of an aircraft the bird sentinels became frightened. They fluttered about and screeched in panic. The men watchers, knowing the sign, spread the alarm. At the word, aviators flew up and out to meet and stop the foe—anti-aircraft guns were made ready—women and children sought shelter in the cellars of their homes. The defenders of Paris were alert and on the watch.

"Forewarned is forearmed" is an old, true adage. The Allies—particularly the Parisians—have Polly's kinfolk to thank for forewarning of many a night raid by the Boches.

Cousin Eleanor.

ESSAY CONTEST.

Subject: "Why I Love the Kiddie Klub."

Ten prizes of four Thrift Stamps (the equivalent of $1.00) will be awarded each of ten Kiddie Klub members, ages from six to fifteen inclusive, who write the best essays on "Why I Love the Kiddie Klub."

Essays must not exceed one hundred and fifty words (150.)

Contestants must state their NAME, ADDRESS, AGE AND CERTIFICATE NUMBER.

Address Cousin Eleanor, Evening World Kiddie Klub, No. 63 Park Row, New York City.

Contest Closes October 30th.

SONNET TO THE KIDDIE KLUB.

A loyal band that never thinks of quitting,
Is always ready to help those in need,
That shows its courage not by word, but deed.
A band that never thinks of idly sitting,
Whose girls are always occupied with knitting,
Whose boys the lives of Scouts all try to lead
And do their best to live up to their creed:
"Prepared for anything with actions fitting."

No equal to this band has e'er been found,
Nor ever will, though you look far and wide
Upon this planet and all others, too,
Because our members come from all around,
From every city, town and country-side
To form the Kiddie Klub, so brave and true.

By THOMAS DAVISON, aged fifteen years, New York City.

MY DADDY OVER THERE.

My daddy is over the ocean
Fighting for you and me,
And often I wish that the Kaiser
Would give back my daddy to me.
My mamma she weeps during all the day long
For dear daddy across the seas,
That's why I wish that my daddy would come
Back to my mamma and me.

By HELEN DELANY, New York City.

THRIFT STAMPS.

A few little pennies,
And then a few more,
Will buy a Thrift Stamp
And help win the war.

Our soldier boys are over there
As all of you do know;
Let our Thrift Stamp back them up
Wherever they go.

Every little Thrift Stamp
Helps to make a cannon ball
To throw upon the Kaiser's house
And make the family fall.

And now, my little cousins,
Just listen here to me,
A tiny little Thrift Stamp
Will make the whole world free.

By RHODA UTTAL, aged nine, New York City.

MY COUNTRY.

She needs men,
Brave and kind.
She needs men,
Brave and kind,
My country says,
I should be
The best man
She can find.

By WALTER BERNSTEIN, aged eight years, New York.

HOW TO JOIN THE KLUB AND OBTAIN YOUR PIN.

"Klub Pin."

Beginning with any number, cut out six of the coupons, like 376—377—378—379—380—381, and send them to Cousin Eleanor, Evening World Kiddie Klub, No. 63 Park Row, New York City, with a note in which you must state YOUR NAME, AGE and ADDRESS.

All children up to sixteen years of age may become members. Each member is presented with a silver gray Klub Pin and membership certificate.

COUPON NO. 376

When the U Boats Came

A STORY OF GERMAN RAIDERS OFF THE COAST

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

(Copyright, Frank A. Munsey Company)

Nelson Hobart is one of a summer colony at a quiet Maine settlement called The Barbette. Others present are Bill Marks, Anne Marshall and her mother, and Eben Scour. During a card party on a cottage veranda a drifting dory is observed in the bay. Hobart goes out to retrieve it, and finds the boat contains a dead fisherman. The man has been shot through the head by what is discovered to be a Mauser ball. Afterward it is learned that a German submarine has been operating off shore, and the fisherman undoubtedly was slain by a rifleman on the U boat. Both Hobart and Scour are attentive to Anne Marshall, and Hobart conceives the suspicion that Scour is in some way connected with the U boat's presence. This is strengthened by the fact that Scour's mother is known to have been a Hungarian. And Scour seems intent on some unknown business, but without in any way furnishing ground for Hobart's half jealous suspicions. Hobart goes to Scour's cottage and finds there an apparatus for hearing under water. It is connected with the waters of the bay by a steel cable. The presence of this apparatus fully convinces Hobart of Scour's guilt.

By Ben Ames Williams

CHAPTER IX.

A SUMMER at the Barbette was usually a quiet affair. This summer had begun like every other summer; but things had happened to disturb the peace which was a part of the place. There was tension in all the air now. The open break between Hobart and Scour was plain for all to see; and Bill Marks and John Benton, who saw much and said little, had perceived that Hobart was spying on Scour. They took no hand in the situation, but they discussed it more than once. Benton was frank—when he talked to Marks alone—in saying that he disliked Hobart and liked Scour. Marks agreed to that, but, at the same time, he mistrusted the lame man—mistrusted and feared him. "There's something about him you can't put your finger on," he said.

But they got no further than that, and Scour remained a perplexing figure. Hobart was watching him closely, but since the night when he saw the lame man install the microphone he had discovered nothing more. Eben was staying close to his cottage. One night, through a chink in its flimsy walls, Hobart saw him playing solitaire at the table with the ear pieces of the microphone clamped in place, listening while he played. Hobart watched him for fifteen minutes, but in that time Eben made no move except to shuffle and deal and play.

It was the next day that Lieut. Morse came to the Barbette. He took a small cottage belonging to John Benton, next door to the outpost, where Mrs. Marshall and Anne were living; and within the hour the Barbette knew that he was a naval officer on leave. He was married, with one child. His wife was an inoffensive little woman; the baby was a girl who liked to sit in the pebbles and arrange them in endless combinations about her; and the Lieutenant himself was a small man, with a small mustache, a weak mouth and watery blue eyes. He was as friendly and confidential as a child. The Marshalls—even Mrs. Marshall—made friends quickly with the newcomers; and the Barbette wondered at this, since Mrs. Marshall had shown no inclination to be friendly with others.

Eben Scour met the officer on the afternoon after his arrival. He was standing by the steps of the Marshall veranda talking to Anne when the Lieutenant came toward them carrying a pie-tin. "Mrs. Morse wanted me to thank you and your mother for that pie," he told Anne. "It was fine."

"Mother loves to cook," Anne told him.

He smiled a little awkwardly.

"We like to have her cook—since she is so liberal," he said.

Anne took the pie-tin. "Do you and Mr. Scour know each other?" she asked; and the officer and Eben shook hands with a word of acknowledgment. Then the Lieutenant returned to his cottage. Anne looked after him thoughtfully. "He—doesn't look like one—fitted to command men, does he?" she asked.

Scour shook his head. "Not exactly."

Mrs. Marshall called to Anne, and the girl turned into the cottage. Eben crossed to the veranda next door where the naval man had dropped in a chair and picked up a book and sat down on the steps with a casual word. "How long will you have here?" he asked.

"Two weeks," the Lieutenant told him. "I wish it were two months."

Eben nodded. "Fine place," he agreed.

"Every one is so—cordial," the officer commented.

"Yes." Eben smiled a little. "Yes—every one is very cordial. Have you—met Nelson Hobart?"

"Mr. Benton introduced us this morning."

Mrs. Morse and the little girl came out on the veranda, and the Lieutenant introduced Eben, and then the woman and the child went down to the beach together. Hobart came from his cottage to join them there a moment later, played with the baby for a space, then climbed to the veranda with a nod of cool greeting to Scour.

"Morning, Lieutenant Morse," he said.

The Lieutenant was thrusting forward a chair, offering a cigarette. "Sit down, sit down!" he urged. "Good of you to drop over."

Hobart grinned at Eben. "Scour and I are—inseparable. Where you see one of us you'll soon see the other."

Eben studied the young man thoughtfully; and Hobart challenged: "Isn't that right, Eben?"

"You're always right, Nelson, old top," said Eben quietly.

The Lieutenant seemed to sense something discordant in the interchange. He broke in with a rapid-fire of conversation. Mrs. Morse left the little girl on the beach and came up and sat with them; and after a time Anne Marshall appeared on the veranda next door, her mother beside her. Mrs. Morse called:

"Won't you come over and sit with us?"

They came. "This is almost a reception," Anne laughed. "Hello, Nelson!"

Hobart's lips were white; his response was inaudible. Mrs. Marshall rocked comfortably in the chair the Lieutenant had surrendered to her. "How long are you to be here?" she asked Mrs. Morse.

"Jimmie's leave is up in two weeks."

Anne looked across at the Lieutenant. "I suppose you are—very busy now?"

The Lieutenant nodded proudly. "Yes. We're working at top-speed—all the time."

"With the army going to France soon you naturally would be," Mrs. Marshall commented. Hobart saw Eben Scour look quickly toward the Lieutenant; and Morse replied:

"Yes—that's our big job now—to convoy them across."

"Do you—expect trouble?" Anne asked.

"We always expect trouble."

"Of course. That is—war," Anne agreed.

Eben pointed quickly. "See—that fish-hawk is about to swoop." They looked up to where the bird poised on fluttering wings, motionless in the air above them; but after an instant it drifted on up the beach.

"Oh—he's gone," Anne exlaimed regretfully. "I love to see them dive for the fish."

Mrs. Morse looked toward Anne. "Jimmie is to go to France with the army," she said, pride struggling with anxiety in her voice. Mrs. Marshall smiled at her.

"You mustn't worry about him, my dear," she warned. "He will come through safely all right."

"Of course," Lieutenant Morse echoed eagerly; and Anne asked:

"What is your ship? Or—are you allowed to tell?"

He laughed boyishly. "Why, of course. I'm on the Shenandoah—have to report to her at the Charlestown Yard in two weeks." He hesitated faintly; and Mrs. Marshall warned:

"We love to hear about what the navy is doing—but—you mustn't tell us anything that would get you into trouble."

The Lieutenant waved his hand. "Oh, this spy talk is all—talk. When you're among friends"——

Hobart watched Eben. He thought the little man was strangely intent, saw his eyes fixed on Morse. Anne asked: "Just how do you go about it to—protect the transports?"

"Destroyers and chasers swarming around them; a watch all the time. That's about all we can do. But—that is enough. We never lost a ship from the other contingents."

"Isn't that splendid!" Mrs. Marshall commented; and the Lieutenant flushed with pleasure.

"Yes—we're proud of it," he agreed.

Hobart clenched his fingers. "I'd like to stow away on one of those transports," he said, regretfully. "I'd give—a lot to be doing my share in France."

Morse laughed. "If you'd like to have a try at it," he offered, "we sail from Baltimore on the twentieth."

Eben rose swiftly; Anne uttered a low exclamation; and the officer looked around and saw condemnation, dismay, suspicion in their eyes. "Why, it's all right," he cried. "There's no—secret about it. When you're among friends."

Mrs. Marshall stood up stiffly. "Come, Anne," she said. "I fancy we'd best go back to the cottage." She glanced at Eben Scour, laughed unpleasantly. "I'm sorry you said that, Lieutenant Morse," she said. "If the—secret got out—we might any of us be suspected. Good morning!"

She and Anne were gone. Lieutenant Morse was flushed and uncomfortable. "I say," he appealed to Eben, "they ought not to act like that. Wasn't it all right for me to tell?"

"Perfectly," said Eben Scour; and Hobart saw that the lame man's eyes were shining.

CHAPTER X.

IT was the next day that Eben Scour disappeared. That is the term Hobart applied to it. Hobart climbed the hill toward the cottage after he had finished his breakfast, and found the door shut and no sign of Scour. The lame man was habitually an early riser. Hobart's curiosity was aroused; he started to try the door, but hesitated. If he did so, and Eben were inside, the lame man would resent the intrusion. Hobart passed by, returned to his cottage.

When night fell, his curiosity drove him toward it. He circled it cautiously once and then again, tried the door, and then a window.

The window slid up at a touch; and before he had time to consider the wisdom of the move, Hobart had climbed inside, and shut the window silently behind him.

The blind had been drawn down; it fell into place when he left the window. The interior of the cottage was black dark. Hobart lighted a match.

The bed had not been slept in; the place was empty. Hobart looked quickly around for the listening apparatus. It was not in sight. He crossed to the door, found where the wire came in through a hole in the floor, traced the wire to a closet. The ear-pieces with their bright, steel clamp hung there.

He fitted them to his head, sat there in the dark.

For a long time he heard no sound he could define. There were low murmurs and grating noises, the chafing of the restless tide upon the rocks, the rattling of pebbles as the surges lifted them. Then, abruptly, Hobart became conscious of a more definite whisper in his ears. It was a rumble, a whirring sound; and it grew louder.

A staccato bark broke in, loud and sharp. Hobart recognized it instantly for the noise of a power-boat's engine, exhausting under water. Its first intensity decreased, at first swiftly, then more slowly, until the explosions came faint and dull. The other, whirring rumble began to overpower the noises of the explosions.

It was some time before Hobart recognized this other sound. Three days before he had been swimming when the Boston boat passed the Barbette, and had dived for a moment under water. The thrashing of the big ship's propeller had come plainly to his ears. It was recollection of this incident that led him now to identify this sound as that of a ship's screw.

His eyes widened in the darkness; and almost instantly, the sound of the screw ceased. For a long time, there was silence.

It was broken by a tapping on his ears, a tapping concussion of sound with a faintly musical note in it. Hobart guessed wildly. "A bell!" he whispered. "Signaling under water."

If the bell was signaling, it was in a code Hobart did not know; yet certainly the bell was signaling. He counted the taps: three, one, two, two, five, four, two, two, one one, one, six, five—

He could make nothing of it; but presently the bell ceased, and another—the sound was more distant, fainter—answered.

(To Be Continued Monday.)