

# The THOUSANDTH WOMAN

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY O. IRWIN MYERS

## CHAPTER I

A Small World.

Cazalet sat up so suddenly that his head hit the woodwork over the upper berth. His own voice still rang in his startled ears. He wondered how much he had said, and how far it could have carried above the throb of the liner's screws, and the mighty pounding of the water against her plates. And then he remembered how he had been left behind at Naples, and rejoined the Kaiser Fritz at Genoa, only to find that he no longer had a cabin to himself.

A snuff assured Cazalet that he was neither alone at the moment nor yet the only one awake; he pulled back the swaying curtain, and there on the settee sat a man with a strong blue chin and the quizzical solemnity of an animated sphinx.

It was his cabin companion, an American named Hilton Toye, and Cazalet addressed him with nervous familiarity.

"I say! Have I been talking in my sleep?"

"Why, yes!" replied Hilton Toye, and broke into a smile that made a human being of him.

Cazalet forced a responsive grin. "What did I say?" he asked, with an amused curiosity at variance with his shaking head and shivering forehead.

Toye took him in from crown to fingertip, with something deep behind his kindly smile. "I judge," said he, "you were dreaming of some drama you've been seeing ashore, Mr. Cazalet."

"Dreaming!" said Cazalet, wiping his face. "It was a nightmare! I must have turned in too soon after dinner. But I should like to know what I said."

"I can tell you word for word. You said, 'Henry Craven—dead!' and then you said, 'Dead—dead—Henry Craven' as if you'd got to have it both ways to make sure."

"It's true," said Cazalet, shuddering. "I saw him lying dead, in my dream."

Hilton Toye took a gold watch from his waistcoat pocket. "Thirteen minutes to one in the morning," he said, "and now it's the September eighteenth. Take a note of that, Mr. Cazalet. It may be another case of second sight for your psychical research society."

"I don't care if it is," Cazalet was smoking furiously.

"Meaning it was no great friend you dreamed was dead?"

"No friend at all, dead or alive!"

"I'm kind of wondering," said Toye, winding his watch slowly, "if he's by way of being a friend of mine. I know a Henry Craven over in England. Lives along the river, down Kingston way, in a big house."

"Called Uplands?"

"Yes, sir! That's the man. Little tower, isn't it?"

The man in the upper berth had to hold on as his curtains swung clear; the man tilted back on the settee, all attention all the time, was more than ever an effective foil to him. Without the kindly smile that went as quickly as it came, Hilton Toye was somber, subtle and demure. Cazalet, on the other hand, was of sanguine complexion and impetuous looks. He was tanned a rich bronze about the middle of the face, but it broke off across his forehead like the coloring of a meerschaum pipe. Both men were in their early prime, and each stood roughly for his race and type; the traveled American who knows the world, and the elemental Britisher who has made some one loose end of it his own.

"I thought of my Henry Craven," continued Toye, "as soon as ever you came out with yours. But it seemed a kind of ordinary name. I might have known it was the same if I'd recollected the name of his firm. Isn't it Craven & Cazalet, the stockbrokers, down in Tokenhouse Yard?"

"That's it," said Cazalet bitterly. "But there have been none of us in it since my father died ten years ago."

"But you're Henry Craven's old partner's son?"

"He's my only son."

"Then no wonder you dream about Henry Craven," cried Toye, "and no wonder it wouldn't break your heart if your dream came true."

"It wouldn't," said Cazalet through his teeth. "He wasn't a white man to me or mine—whatever you may have found him."

"I had a little place near his one summer. I know only what I heard down there."

"What did you hear?" asked Cazalet. "I've been away ten years, ever since the crash that ruined everybody but the man at the bottom of the whole thing. It would be a kindness to tell me what you heard."

"Well, I guess you've said it yourself right now. That man seems to have beggared everybody all around except himself; that's how I make it out," said Hilton Toye.

"He did worse," said Cazalet through his teeth. "He killed my poor father; he banished me to the wilds of Australia, and he sent a better man than himself to prison for fourteen years!"

Toye opened his dark eyes for once.

"Is that so? No, I never heard that," said he.

"You hear it now. He did all that, indirectly, and I didn't realize it at the time. I was too young, and the whole thing laid me out too fat; but I know it now, and I've known it long enough. It was worse than a crash. It was a scandal. That was what finished us off, all but Henry Craven! There'd been a gigantic swindle—special investments recommended by the firm, bogus certificates and all the rest of it. We were all to blame, of course. My poor father ought never to have been a partner. Even I—I was ought to have known what was going on. But Henry Craven did know. He was in it up to the neck, though a fellow called Scruton did the actual job. Scruton got fourteen years—and Craven got our old house on the river."

"And feathered it pretty well!" said Toye, nodding. "Yes, I did hear that. And I can tell you they don't think any better of him, in the neighborhood, for going to live right there. But how did he stop the other man's mouth, and—how do you know?"

"Never mind how I know," said Cazalet. "Scruton was a friend of mine, though an older man; he was good to me, though he was a wrong 'un himself. He paid for it—paid for it—that I can say! But he was engaged to Ethel Craven at the time, was going to be taken into partnership on their marriage, and you can put two and two together for yourself."

"Did she wait for him?"

"About as long as you'd expect of the breed! She was her father's daughter. I wonder you didn't come across her and her husband!"

"I didn't see so much of the Craven crowd," replied Hilton Toye. "I wasn't stuck on them either. Say, Cazalet, I wouldn't be that old man when Scruton comes out, would you?"

But Cazalet showed that he could hold his tongue when he liked, and his grim look was not so legible as some that had come and gone before. This one stuck until Toye produced a big flask from his grip, and the talk shifted to less painful ground. It was the last night in the Bay of Biscay, and Cazalet told how he had been in it a fortnight on his way out by sailing-vessel. He even told it with considerable humor, and hit off sundry passengers of ten years ago as though they had been aboard the German boat that night and Toye drew him out about the bush until the shadows passed for minutes from the red-brick face with the white-trick forehead.

"I remember thinking I would dig for gold," said Cazalet. "That's all I knew about Australia. But you can have adventures of sorts if you go far enough up-country for 'em; it still pays to know how to use your fists out there. I remember once at a bush shanty they dished up such tricky chops that I said I'd fight the cook if

they sent him up; and I'm blowed if it wasn't a fellow I'd been at school with and worshipped as no end of a swell at games! Potts his name was, old Venus Potts, the best looking chap in the school among other things; and there he was, cooking carrion at twenty-five bob a week! Instead of fighting we joined forces, got a burrowing job on a good station, then a better one over shearing, and after that I worked my way in as book-keeper, and my pal became one of the head overseers. Now we're our own bosses with a share in the show, and the owner comes up only once a year to see how things are looking."

"I hope he had a daughter," said Toye, "and that you're going to marry her, if you haven't yet?"

Cazalet laughed, but the shadow had returned. "No, I left that to my pal," he said. "He did that all right!"

"Then I advise you to go and do likewise," rejoined his new friend with a geniality impossible to take amiss. "I shouldn't wonder, now, if there's some girl you left behind you."

Cazalet shook his head. "None who would look on herself in that light," he interrupted. It was all he said,

but once more Toye was regarding him as shrewdly as when the night was younger, and the littleness of the world had not yet made them confident and boon companion.

Eight bells actually struck before their great talk ended and Cazalet swore that he missed the "watches aft, sir!" of the sailing-vessel ten years before.

"Say!" exclaimed Hilton Toye, knitting his brows over some nebulous recollection of his own. "I seem to have heard of you and some of your yarns before. Didn't you spend nights in a log-hut miles and miles from any human being?"

It was as they were turning in at last, but the question spoiled a yawn for Cazalet.

"Sometimes, at one of our out-stations," said he, looking puzzled.

"I've seen your photograph," said Toye, regarding him with a more critical stare. "But it was with a beard."

"I had it off when I was ashore the other day," said Cazalet. "I always meant to, before the end of the voyage."

"I see. It was a Miss Macnair showed me that photograph—Miss Blanche Macnair lives in a little house down there near your old home. I

judged hers is another old home that's been broken up since your day."

"They've all got married," said Cazalet.

"Except Miss Blanche. You write to her some, Mr. Cazalet?"

"Once a year—regularly. It was a promise. We were kids together," he explained, as he climbed back into the upper berth.

"Guess you were a lucky kid," said the voice below. "She's one in a thousand, Miss Blanche Macnair!"

CHAPTER II

Second Sight.

Southampton Water was an ornamental lake dotted with fairy lamps. It was a midsummer night, lagging a whole season behind its fellows. But already it was so late that the English passengers on the Kaiser Fritz had abandoned all thought of catching the last train to London.

They tramped the deck in their noisy, shining, shore-going boots; they munched the rail in lazy inarticulate appreciation of the nocturne in blue stippled with green and red and counted yellow lights. But Achilles in his tent was no more conspicuous absentee than Cazalet in his cabin as the Kaiser Fritz steamed sedately up Southampton Water.

He had finished packing; the state-room floor was impassable with the baggage that Cazalet had wanted on the five-weeks' voyage. There was scarcely room to sit down, but in what there was sat Cazalet like a soul in torment. All the vultures of the night before, of his dreadful dream, and of the poignant reminiscences to which his dream had led, might have been crawling at his vitals as he sat there waiting to set foot once more in the land from which a bitter blow had driven him.

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Rural Serbia

THE kingdom of Serbia is one of the smallest in Europe, and has been very slow in development. Greater progress, however, has been made during the last ten years than for centuries before. The area of the country is 23,891 square miles, the population being over four and a half millions, mostly professing the Greek orthodox faith. The inhabitants are largely devoted to agricultural pursuits and, as a consequence, there are very numerous small farms in existence which belong to the farmers, and by the law of primogeniture descend from father to son. Although there are two large towns, Belgrade and Nish, most of the population is rural, and 85 per cent, at least, are engaged in agriculture; but it is of a primitive kind, as may be witnessed any day on the small farms referred to where the wooden plow used in the days of Xenophon may be seen in daily use.

This primitive state of agriculture is largely due to the absence of any organization or systematic agricultural education. Modern methods have only been introduced in a tentative way during the last ten years, but there are no agricultural colleges yet in existence, although there are a number of model farms which are subsidized by the state, and in which technical instruction in dairying, fruit farming, silk cultivation, wine growing and similar subjects is given. Tobacco is produced to some extent, but is not very much exported, and indeed the total exports from the country are comparatively small, the largest amount being sent to Austria-Hungary.

The principal crop raised is maize, and very large quantities of this cereal are consumed in the country in

the manufacture of maize bread and many other preparations in which ground maize forms the basis.

The flesh consumed is principally pork, although mutton, goat and beef enter to some extent into the daily dietary, more especially in the towns. Pork, however, in the fresh and in the cured state, is used everywhere, and every farmer, small or large, is a grower of pigs, the type preferred being the Mangalitz breed, which has the characteristic of producing deep layers of fat along the back, which is cut into long strips, slightly salted and used in the place of butter.

So important is the pork-curing industry considered in Serbia that the government subsidizes the curing establishments and in several ways gives concessions to the curers of pig meat. The salt required in the business is subject to a rebate of 50 per cent of its value, as it is used for industrial purposes, there being a state monopoly of salt in the country.

Some of the customs in connection with agriculture are very interesting, among them being the universal co-operation of the farmers in annually sending their sheep to the hills. The sheep industry ranks next to that of pigs, and wool is produced in considerable quantity. Serbian mutton is noted also in eastern countries, and before the war was much in demand in Constantinople.

But the principal use of the sheep is to produce milk, from which a variety of cheeses is made. The farmers who are the owners of the sheep unite together to employ one or more shepherds, who take charge of their flocks and milk them while they are on the hills. The shepherds are also responsible for making the cheese out of the milk, and pay themselves for their trouble by taking a certain percentage of the produce, the remainder being divided among the farmers, according to the number of sheep they possess.

The cheese produced is somewhat bitter in taste and not unlike ewe milk cheese, which at one time was produced so largely in the south of Scotland.

The national customs of rural Serbia are very quaint. The marriage ceremonies, for example, are of the most elaborate character; the bride is selected by the parents of the bridegroom, and this is looked upon as being quite in the natural order of human affairs; but all the ceremonies in connection with marriage are of the most elaborate and, for that matter, costly character.

Christmas ceremonies also are very elaborate and are reminiscent of Pagan rites. One of the customs is to cut down a tree in the forest, and in falling it must lie to the east. In every household such a tree is cut into three portions, and is looked upon as being sacred and not to be touched. There is much throwing of wheat, which has a certain symbolic significance, and the log is then placed on the fire, while, at the same time, the incense is roasted for a feast. The ceremonies continue during Christmas day, which is given up to feasting, mingled with religious exhortations, and only come to an end when the night is far advanced.

People Are Superstitious.

As a nation the Serbians are extremely superstitious, and this feature runs through the whole of their national customs, whether it is in the laying out of a house or in the preparation for death; but the Serbian farmer does not fear death, as he usually prepares the boards for his own coffin and keeps them in readiness in his house.

The French "Brirot."

In many parts of my country, France, a "brirot" is a sort of a fruit cake, sometimes a plum pudding, over which a plentiful quantity of rum or cognac is poured, then set aside, thus affording great joy to those around the table, writes a correspondent.

The immediate result is the burning of the whiskers of those who have whiskers and get too near the dish, then the partaking of the cake, which leaves in the mouth a not altogether pleasant taste of cake, rum, sulphur from the abominable French matches used to light the thing, and a general sensation of having swallowed a burnt whisky bottle cork.

I am aware that my description of a "brirot" is far from being as poetical as that of the picture of a bowl made of an orange peel and flaming aesthetically like the urn of the Vestals. It is true, nevertheless.

Something Missing.

Rev. Mr. Johningham had depicted beautifully the wonders of the thirder shore, including the milk and honey rivers which nourish the blessed, but after service one of the brothers sought him eagerly.

"Reberend," he asked, "am milk and honey all dey hab over yondah?"

"Yes, brotah."

"No chicken?"

"No, brotah."

"Or pork chops?"

"No, brotah."

"Possum and sweet 'taters neithah?"

"No, brotah."

"An' nary a watermillin?"

"No, deah brotah."

"Den, reberend, does you think the Lohd was calculatin' on de cullud man when he built dat place?"

To Be Pitied.

In a good many instances, says the Joplin (Mo.) Globe, the winners of the first prizes are to be pitied. For instance, in the corn show over at Carthage the first prize is a \$100 loving cup, while the lesser prizes include a \$50 pig, a \$25 tool case, two cultivators, a section of wire fence and a \$10 White Orpington rooster.

"As between a rooster and the loving cup," concludes the Globe, "the average man in this commercial age would grab the rooster with his eyes shut."—Kansas City Times.

South Africa's Demand for Films.

South Africa imports 60,000 feet of moving picture film weekly.

Toronto Street Railwaymen union has 141 members fighting at the front.

Drill Amenities.

Mayor John Purroy Mitchell said at a dinner in New York:

"The memories of camp life are a very pleasant thing to any soldier. Even the little vicarities of camp life seem in the retrospect pleasant enough."

"Thus I often laugh about a banker who was being drilled daily one day at Plattsburg by a broker-sergeant."

"What'll you give me," said the broker-sergeant, an old Yale end, "if I take that bump off your back?"

"I'll give you," the banker answered with a tart laugh, "something to make your hair grow, sarge."

Pilot Famous for Carpets.

Pilot is the center of an important Serbian industry. Pilot carpets, blue and red, are to be found in every Serbian home, and have gained fame beyond the Balkans. They nearly all are made in private houses, entirely by hand, often without even a shuttle, the workers using no patterns, but artistic instinct producing harmonious results. The art has been acquired, no doubt, from the Turks, who learned it

from the Persians, but Pilot carpets have qualities all their own. Colors and materials are so strong that it is almost impossible to wear them out.

Sick? Nonsense!

The ocean liner was rolling like a chip, but as usual in such instances one passenger was aggressively, disgustingly healthy. "Sick, eh?" he remarked to a pale-green person who was leaning on the rail. The pale-green person regarded the healthy one with all the scorn he could muster. "Sick nothing!" he snorted weakly. "I'm just hanging over the front of the boat to see how the captain cranks it!"

Ready for the Day.

Little Elsie entered the parlor one morning and her quick eye discovered that the slip coverings had been removed from the furniture. "Look, mammat!" she exclaimed. "Somebody has taken the nighties off the chairs."

Neglect Their Opportunity.

The reason some speakers are not humorous more frequently is that they neglect to try to be serious.

## IMPORTANCE OF GOOD HUMOR

Business Man Tells Why It is Necessary to Have Men of Friendly Spirit.

"If my bookkeeper is a man of sour disposition," said a business man, "I don't mind it so much. He comes in contact with the office force only, and if he is a good bookkeeper we can get along with his sourness; but of course it is important to have men of good humor at all points where they come in contact with the public. I don't mean jolly, foolish men, but men of natural good humor and the friendly spirit and courtesy that commonly goes with it.

"I regard it as of high importance to have such men at the counters, where they deal with people coming in, regulars and strangers. People instinctively judge of an establishment by the first person they meet in it; if he is a man of courtesy they feel like coming again; if he is cool and indifferent to them they feel like staying away.

"We aim to have good humored men for shipping clerks. Such a man can expedite work a lot; his spirit is contagious, puts everybody in good humor; every truckman likes him, cottons to him, and will move faster and do more for him than he would for a sour, grumpy man. And it's so all around.

"We can stand a sour bookkeeper, if he's a good one; but at all points where they come in contact with people outside we want men of good humor; human; and that's the spirit in which we try to do business ourselves."

Make Your Back Yard Profitable.

Today, in the United States, thousands of people are making money from the back yards, asserts a writer in Opportunity.

Some are making their entire livelihoods from a few hundred feet of ground, while in other instances incomes are doubled and even trebled by the judicious farming of small patches of ground as a side line or odd-time job. Investigation has proved, in fact, that it is not only possible, but profitable, to conduct a small-lot farm and in hundreds of instances people in all sections of the country are earning incomes direct from the soil of their home acre.

The reason so many people who have the opportunity to grow vegetables and other crops for their own use, as well as for sale, do not do so is due, no doubt, to the fact that they fail to understand the real profits that can be derived from a small plot of ground.

As a matter of fact more vegetables can be grown in the city or suburban back yard than the average family can eat, with a good quantity to spare.

A Premonition.

"I think I'll take out that life insurance. It will come in very handy for my wife at this time."

"Well, insurance is a fine thing, but you're good for forty years yet."

"I don't know. I have a foreboding that the agent is going to talk me to death."

His Only Preventive.

Artist (to model he has just picked up in the street)—A man I had up here the other day stole two pounds when my back was turned. Would you do a thing like that?

Model—Oh, no, sir, I haven't the speed.—London Punch.

Vanished Value.

"You can't get something for nothing," said the ready-made philosopher.

"Somebody did," exclaimed Mr. Chuggins. "The automobile I bought day before yesterday wouldn't bring half its price if I sold it today."

They All Do It.

Parker—Old Minturn is continually reminding people that he is a self-made man, afflicted with a sort of religious mania.

Harker—What's the answer?

Parker—He's always praising his maker.

REFORMERS.

"I have always said there should be no money in politics."

"Yes; everybody knows of your strong effort to get it all out."

Creating "Atmosphere."

"I judge this is going to be a problem play."

"What makes you think so?"

"During every pause in the dialogue the hero drinks a highball and lights a fresh cigarette."

Well Paired.

"You and Grump seem to get along pretty well."

"Yes. You see, he never borrows anything but trouble, and that's all I ever have to lend."

Wake Up.

Vain Actor—It is the dream of my life to play Hamlet!

Unsympathizing Friend—Haven't they got any alarm clocks where you live!

Moral: Don't Get Found Out.

Dix—I never knew a rogue yet who wasn't unhappy.

Dix—Of course not. It's the rogues who are not known who are the happy ones.

And Cajole the Cream.

She—I believe in always using gentle methods.

He—Always? Then I suppose in stead of beating eggs you coat 'em into a froth—what?

Persistent.

"Will you marry me?"

"No, a thousand times, no!"

"Well, will you if I ask you a thousand and one times?"

Why Not?

Knicker—Think the stock exchange should be regulated?

Bocker—Yes, it should be arranged for stocks to go up when you buy and go down when you sell.

Mistaken Kindness.

"I walked the floor for three hours with a sick child last night," said the faithful father.

"Did it finally go to sleep?"

"Yes, but not till my wife's mother took charge. She told me to quit walking the floor with the child—that was what irritated it."

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