

CHAPTER VIII

The Pattern, The Cause and Effect

The pattern, the cause and effect, The course of things is set in the very origin and beginning of things from the minutest atom to the most immense star. What happened between Cynthia and Foster on that night in a lonely room in a New York hotel (it was very lonely and dismal after the act), was in the course of the event to bring about the act of Dr. Monarch. For, except for accidents, unforeseen circumstances, aberrations, ~~seeds~~ seeds go on to fruition. Dr. Monarch's deed interrupting the original and intended course of events, set in motion a chain of <sup>other</sup> reactions, having its beginning and origin in itself. For the deed even though a kindly one and intended for the salvation of a soul and the saving of life, had perforce and of sheer necessity - because of prejudice, legal, wiggly tape and poisonous tongues - to be performed in the dark, and under circumstances which set forces in motion, inimical and dangerous.

Cynthia followed instructions with painful punctative scrupulousness. All night she lay in bed in the throes of fear that the slightest movement of leg or arm might flood her with blood, would open the sluices of her blood stream. Like a lamb, like a mouse trapped, <sup>that</sup> (and) had ceased ~~the~~ the struggle for life. Along with the long night and the lone struggle. The first part of the ~~long~~ night went off peacefully enough, although sleep came in fits and starts to guard against the breaking of the dykes. O, Watchman, what of the night? The night is purpling into dawn! And in

the first watches of the dawn she felt a relaxation come over her, and a feeling of well being. Everything seemed to work out in its normal course. She felt her thighs pleasureably. They were regaining the satiny feel of before, the viability and exquisite warmth. And while life was creeping in, the soddiness of pregnancy was leaving her. She felt the buoyancy of new life in her. She stretched with the welcome of it, and the longing and impatience to be launched on it. Dreaming the dream of happiness again, and the trip back to school in the morning. She fell asleep.

A grinding searing pain. She moaned in her sleep. She was startled into wakefulness. A chill ran down her spine as she felt an extruding mass between her thighs. She sat up quickly and saw that it was a mahogany colored bulging thing. Per instructions she recognized it as a dark clot, though rather larger than the expected normal. Just the same it was only a clot. With it the pain let go, and that in itself was a relief. There was no aftermath of bleeding, which was also to the good. ~~Under another item of instruction, look for tissue of pregnancy, under water if necessary. None was there. But she didn't go to the basin. For fear of provoking bleeding, Excellent judgment, she heard Dr. Monarch, Or was it Dr. Capen. Her nerves were a bit frayed, but still no alarm.~~ Things still were taking their chartered course as prescribed by Dr. Monarch. No deviation of the getting-well course.

A disturbed sleep. A malevolent sleep. Those ugly shapes and figures. The hellishness of it. She awoke with a sense of coolness. A clammy feeling. The sun was bright in the room. But her eyes hadn't perceived the cheerful outlay. She was weak, and the weakness made for dreariness in her soul.

A good thing she had towelling from home. No trace on the sheets. She jumped out of bed. The first gush.

Still nothing to worry. Dr. Monarch had spoken of it. Good Dr. Monarch!

But Dr. Monarch had warned against a second gush. She can't think of

going back to school. Not yet. She'd start another gush. She looks in her purse and fondles the extra five dollar bill. The Great Provider, she thinks of the mild doctor. She would have returned the whole amount if he had put in more than five. And she'd be stranded. He knew exactly to the last penny. How grateful she was. She'd have enough for another night at the small hotel, if she had to stay over.

Back to bed. The one great luxury. As she tried to climb in her knees became shaky, and the calves were like molasses. But she did get in. Hope, eternal hope. The flow was capped by some supernatural power. And the relaxing comfort ~~of the~~ and softness of the bed. She fell asleep.

In the early afternoon she was calculating her chances of taking the train back to Wheelport. Just about twenty four hours after... She was lying awake and rather comfortable. Just a tiny flow. But as she got up there was a nausea and weakness. She crawled back into bed. A little more rest. She was thirsty, and she had some cold water. More nausea. Just the water, she thought. The maid came in to make the bed.

"Not feeling well, Miss?"

"Must have caught a nasty cold. Feel chilly."

"Shall I bring you something - tea and toast?"

"That would be fine." And she put a silver coin into her hand.

"Thank you," the maid said and she left the room.

"A little tea will take away the nausea, she said to herself. The toast will give her strength.

And indeed she felt better. She was up again. And hurriedly she threw her things together in her night case. As she lifted it down, the enemy had <sup>had</sup> that, lurked ~~away~~ for some pretext came to the attack. Good pretext. The hustling, and the lifting. There was the cold pain, and the gush. But not as <sup>low</sup> as the first one. Maybe there wasn't enough blood. But she didn't know it. Back to bed and some more rest. The flow stopped and so

did the pain. But she was entirely exhausted. She was thirsty, a parched dryness in her mouth, pulse racing and throbbing, head pounding!

She felt like a trapped animal, and she gave herself up to it. There was no question of her going back this afternoon. It was settled for her by that part of her mind that was still functioning. The other part didn't care. It was disillusioned, and only semi-conscious; beyond making decisions. She knew enough that the five dollars Dr. Monarch had thrown magically (He was the God of magic to her now, but as god immutable and silent. His name to be whispered only into her depths, and not in the hearing of anyone.) into her purse would take her over the crisis for another night. ~~She had the money for another night's lodging.~~ She had the money for another night's lodging.

And now it was evening. And the maid had come to fix the room for another tenant. Surely she would <sup>be</sup> gone by now. If she hadn't she would have let her intentions known to stay for another night.

Cynthia's <sup>eyes</sup> were closed. She was enjoying the fantasy of her dreamland half wakefulness. There was only that half sardonic smile on her lips, not the Risus Sardonicus of tetany, nor even the facies Hippocratica of the skeletal-like ~~is~~ appearance of the face before it truly becomes a skeleton; for though she was <sup>o</sup> thoroughly exhausted from loss of blood, and the face drawn, and the eyes sunken, she was still in the bloom of youth and blessed with great power of renaissance. That half smile might be a joke she was enjoying on herself in her semi-wakefulness, or semi-consciousness. She was to rush to Dr. Capen on a third gush. No third gush, no Dr. Capen. No third gush, no Dr. Capen, no third, no Dr. Capen... No Dr. Capen..... Dr. Capen... She'd hate to go back to him. To <sup>o</sup> impose her unlucky self on that kindly man. The friend of her friend George. Oh, George, George, where are you? There was also a faint "Foster" on her lips. But it was only a poor third. It was Dr. Capen who amused her sense of humor most in that fantastic land. For she had <sup>not</sup> fooled, at least so far, Dr. Monarch. Mustn't whisper

his name. Deep hypnotic spell. Or was it a deep-seated consciousness that welled up from some vital depth within her that brought her that lucid moment, ~~and~~ that sealed her lips to that name. A faceless face, a namless name. A desert, a mist, a void. And the lucidity of the moment brought on that confusion of the fog, and the name became namless as soon as appeared before her sightless eyes, before that screen which was lucid yet was also clouded, and only semi-translucent when the name came up. The lips started to form the name, but sunk back, and only contorted into the smile of the joke she was playing upon herself, and Dr. Capen, Dr. Capen... Dr. Capen... Dr. Capen... George!

~~Dr. Capen~~ was strongly on her lips when the maid came in. ~~Dr. Capen~~ was coupled with that half-bitter smile on her lips. But the maid was startled at the face. She didn't know about the Hippocratic Face, but she knew that the face looked ill, very ill. She could see the sunken eyes and the drawn skin on the cheek bones, and the death-paleness. The maid was frightened and she was about to run to the office or to the matron. But at the very moment Cynthia opened her eyes and looked frankly and openly and smilingly at the maid. There was also a weak pleading in her look to her, a trusting look. The maid didn't run away, but stepped over, tip-toeing to the bed, as if not to disturb that look of happiness in Cynthia's face. Her own face was alight with a smile, withal, a troubled smile. For the maid had come to like the sweet lonely girl, and now in her extremity she loved her like a mother. Her protective mother instinct. And she was so frail, and transparently pretty. Like an angel. She was years older than Cynthia, and had never been married. And she knew the ways of life. And she presumed on that knowledge, and meditated on the plight that this helpless creature might be in. She was quite sure of it now. And as she approached Cynthia she was in the full possession of the goodness that had ever been in her. Her heart was full with love and tenderness for her.

"I'll tell them at the office you have a case of grippe, and that you

back

will leave tomorrow. I am off after six, but I'll come ~~me~~ to stay with you."

"You are very good..." She paused in her weakness. "There is some money in my purse on the bureau...take out enough for the room."

"Time enough for that. You'll pay them tomorrow before you leave. I'll tell them it's a case of grippe. Common this time of year. I know how it is. I am older, much older. I know. Went through the same.... You need a friend. Have a date ~~me~~ tonight. But that can wait.... "

"What's on your mind, Miss... Miss...?"

"Just call me Maud... You know, the same as in the funnies." And she laughed her <sup>r</sup>mithless laugh, trying her best to bring a smile to Cynthia's lips. I've been through the straits once. I know. And one needs a friend.

"You are a good-hearted girl. Don't know what I'd have done..."

"Don't worry none, child. I am old enough to be your mother. I know the ropes. That Dr. Capen, I heard you say, he's a good guy to know..."

"What you talking about....?"

"Don't you worry. I'll say not a word. He's a good guy. He helped me out. But that was along time ago. Had no money either. Almost as young as you. Had pity on me. A babe lost in the woods... And he came along, angel and all..."

"You don't know what you are talking about, Maud!" Cynthia admonished her with the last bit of strength.

"Now, don't upset yourself, darling. Sleep is what you need. I'll bring up an egg-nogg, with just a bit of brandy, and you'll sleep, sleep. And I'll watch over you."

Inside her Maud was thankful for the name "Dr. Capen", for she was sure that he performed the... But the problem presented itself to her what she should do if an emergency arose. It would divulge...and she couldn't take it. He above all... If the girl dies,.. what would happen to him...?

On the other end, Foster agreed to abide by their decision to await

word from them before he left Wheelport. At this end Dr. Capen and George had decided to begin a systemic search for her. By late afternoon of the second day they were sure that Cynthia was in hiding somewhere in town.

"My guess she never went back," said Dr. Capen.

"You think she did...?"

"She did, but not what you think," Dr. Capen tried to be reassuring.

"She wouldn't try anything desperate without first at least make a try to get out of the mess."

"Not too hopeful. Suppose she did try and hadn't succeeded?"

"Then...." He didn't finish.

"The alternative is the river. The cold ocean."

"Let's not jump to conclusions."

"She maybe in danger even if she did get help. You know what I mean?"

"Yes, things may happen in the best of hands under such circumstances."

"Like sepsis, for instance. Or an incomplete abortion. And bleeding to death."

"How do you know all this?"

"What concerns the 'moral' turpitudes, and the victims of our ~~moralists~~ moralists is my concern. You see, in the secrecy of a private office, and may be dingy at that, the hazards have their best free hand, and their best excuses..."

"Well, the moralists have their points. But I must admit it's done unto death."

"To the death of their victims. I am not talking about the morality of the freedom of one's body, ~~to do with it as one sees fit~~, so long as no one suffers by it. Surely we have reached that stage of civilization when we can perceive, even admit such freedom. But let's say that such a question is still debatable, certainly giving freedom to a young woman's body to continue to live an untrammled, untrammled life is a God given right."

"Before that Bar of Justice I am as guilty as they. She came to me first, and while I hesitated she went. Gone to her death maybe."

"How does one begin such a search?" George asked.

"She wouldn't give her name -- not the right one. It could be she went to Dr. Monarch. I tried to drill the name into her mind as she was leaving."

"She can easily be identified, even if she didn't give the right name."

Dr. Monarch readily admitted that Cynthia had been to see him. "I have done my best," he told Dr. Capen. "She said she'd stay overnight in some hotel... No, she would <sup>not</sup> name the hotel..."

Dr. Capen: "That's understandable. We must respect her wishes... Everything will be all right."

"Dr. Monarch: "I wish I could be as optimistic."

Dr. Capen: "You are in the clear -- whatever happens. Understand! It was my task. She came to <sup>me</sup> first. What procedure?"

"Not a complete D and C." Dr. Monarch.

Dr. Capen: "Hemorrhage!"

"She was to go to you first signs of trouble," Dr. Monarch.

"Dr. Capen: "She wouldn't. Same reason she ran out on me."

Dr. Monarch: "She was so pitiful and frail... You know <sup>I</sup> have given up this work a long time... She did say she had been to you." ~~She had~~

Dr. Capen: "Yes, Yes..."

Dr. Monarch: "Something about being too personal to impose on you. I suppose she meant... Well, I don't know. But she was right anyway. You are too important... I mean it. As for me - I am too old to care."

"Well, I muffed it," Dr. Capen said. He continued, "Now, if anything, anything..... I am taking over. For you mum is the word."



Unless they canvassed every hotel room, and looked under cover of those in bed?

But her name must be protected.

Late that evening George said: "Doctor, I don't care if I set every wagging tongue on its tail, but we are going to do something."

"And what do you propose to do?"

"Call every hotel and rooming house with a description of a sick young girl...?"

A sick young nameless girl. One sick unto death.

And the tracks and trails criss-cross, and the bewilderment grows.

And the fear and desperation!

But time must work fast, or all ~~will~~ is lost.

Time, time, where art thou? Magic time, cruel time!

Time and the pact. She had made an absolute pact. A pact with time.

Will time be in her favor?

Will time lead her through bright corridors - the corridor of time?

Or through the shadow of the valley of...?

Time, have pity on a young unblemished soul.

Time has pity?

Time covers everything with the dust of time - its cruelties, and benevolences.

But mostly it's cruel, inexorable, and vindictive.

So why ask for time?

Time is a great healer. Time is a great killer.

Time creates only to destroy.

Time preys on itself, and in time will destroy itself.

Until another Time which will be permanent, eternal.

A sick young girl is fighting with or against Time!

The germ of Time is in her. Will it ultimately destroy her?