

### LAST NIGHT

I wandered down the river of dreams,  
Out into the sea of sleep.  
There many castles I have owned,  
And kingdoms I could not keep.

I saw in the clouds my life unclad,  
Stripped of its sorrow and pain.  
I saw a life filled with joy—  
Oh! I want to go back again,

But never again will I wander there,  
Under the clear blue sky,  
For now I am old, withered, and gray,  
And now I'm prepared to die.

—J. W. C. '60

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### THE TREASURE HUNT

"It was rather a cold night, late in the fall, about November I'd say", the old man related. "I was only a child then; my father was the keeper of the light-house. There was a hint of snow in the air and my mother announced, as she came in from the wood-pile, her shawl wrapped around her, "There a storm a brewin' fer sure". Mother was always right about the weather and though my father said in joking that she was a witch, he always made preparations when she predicted a storm.

"After the supper grandfather told us a story or two and then we said our prayers and piled into bed. Father was outside, I remember, putting shutters on the windows, for I could hear them banging against the stone walls in the wind. My older brother John had gone up to the tower to trim the lamps, we didn't have the electric then as we do now".

The old man paused as he emptied his pipe, sucked on it, stogged it with Beaver Cut and lit it again.

"Now where was I? Oh yes. John had gone to trim the lamps; I believe I went up there once before I was twelve years old; it was really a creepy place, specially in the fall; it was dark when you went up there and the light from the lamps spread ghosts and phantoms on the walls, and the drafts of wind, besides chilling you to the bone often blew out the flame and there you were in all that blackness."

Someone moved, sort of breaking the atmosphere and was given a few dirty looks.

"Now that night lads she really did blow, as the others snored it off, I lay awake listening to the sea pounding itself into the cliffs below like muffled roars of thunder, the wind tugged against the shutters and banged them against the hard walls, and a ridge of snow blew in through a crack in the wall. It was an awful night and I said a prayer for any poor man who might have the misfortune to be at sea on such a night."

A coo coo clock started cooing from the wall to tell us it was eleven-thirty.

"That damned thing's always wrong. Only eleven be me, the old timer said as he looked fiercely at the clock.

"Anyway to continue with my story, somewhere during the night I must have gone to sleep, but father stayed up for a while reading a book he'd received in the last mail. Books were rare in those days and no pictures like today. It must have been twelve o'clock when father heard the noise at the door; now there was not a soul living for miles, saving us; so he must have got an awful start when he opens the door and in falls this chap all soaked to the skin, his clothes all tore up and so full of blood you couldn't see his face. Now father was a prudent man and did not wish to alarm anybody, so he lifted this half-dead fellow in and laid him out on the couch against the wall over there."

Everyone gazed in awe at the simple couch half-visible in the light from the fire place.

"He was in bad shape but after a while he came to, and started to tell my father in hoarse tones what had happened. It appears he and a friend had landed a day before, just a little way down the coast. They were after a treasure which they believed, according to a map they had, to have been buried there. However they had been warned by the old man who had given them the map, to be very careful since the place was cursed. They only laughed at this and started off on their trip."

"Well they got here and started looking for the indicated landmarks; sure enough, by gor, they were all there and so the two of them started digging. They'd no sooner started than the earth gave way and the two of them fell down about a hundred feet onto the rocks below. One of them cracked his spine and died, the other one, the fellow who came to the lighthouse, however it happened, was not killed, but was cut up and bruised quite a bit, laying down there in the water unconscious for some time. When he came to, he could see in the darkness the beam of the lamp in the Lighthouse and began to pick his way on his hands and knees over the jagged rocks to where he had seen the lights, leaving the corpse of his companion strewn on the boulders behind him."

We were all on edge to find out what finally happened, but the old man enjoying the interest we were showing and being a born story-teller, did not rush into an ending.

"This lad lapsed into unconsciousness several times that night and raved in delirium about his home and other things my father could not understand. However one word came up consistently: map, obviously referring to the map they had used in their treasure hunt. When he came into consciousness again my father gave him some weak tea, then the dying lad put his hand in his shirt and unfastened a leather strap tied around his neck which held in a little pouch a map."

"He gave this map to my father, since he didn't think he'd ever use it, and because my father had been kind to him. No sooner had he done this than he looked at the door with horror in his eyes and shouted:

"There he is!"

"My father looked but could only see the closed door, just as you see it now; but that young feller, he'd seen someone there, or else he imagined he had. Then he straightened out and gave her up".

"Now it may seem to end there but actually it didn't. You see, my father had the map now. Of course he had no intention of going treasure-hunting, but John my older brother did."

"On a Saturday morning he went out with a pick and shovel and a copy of the landmarks. We never saw him afterwards from that day on. Me mother took it bad, never did quite get over it. You may be sure there were no more treasure hunts; father said that the treasure must have started evilly and could only end in evil. We keep the map, I'll get it for you."

The old man roused himself and went to a back room, came back shortly with a glass case in which was a piece of yellowed paper with faint contours of the coast and some kind of written instructions at the bottom. It was plainly a very old map.

"I wonder", he said, "if anyone will ever find the treasure, or if there ever was one". He relit his pipe and as an after thought said, "Funny thing, I never could figure out what that dying lad saw at the door or where his friend's body went, since we never found it."

—CYRIL BYRNE '60