



## Deleted Scene from *Against the Tide* Courtesy of Author Elizabeth Camden

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Flickering light from thousands of candles illuminated the immense reception area in Memorial Hall, where the vaulted ceiling stretched over the gathering of dignitaries that filled the chamber below. Daniel Tremain studied the throngs of gentlemen in tuxedos and faculty in their professorial robes with a critical eye. There was a time when he would have given his right arm for the opportunity to attend a school like Harvard. Tragedy and the responsibility for a family made college impossible for him, but even after all these years it still hurt just a tinge when he attended gatherings such as this.

“Do you see him anywhere?” Clara asked as they moved further into the chamber where champagne, lobster, and caviar were being passed among the exulted gathering. They took the train from Baltimore to see Clara’s brother, Dr. Clyde Endicott, receive one of the college’s highest honors in recognition of his crusading medical work. He had been a missionary doctor for more than a decade, carrying vaccines into parts of the world that had never seen a white man. It was rare for Clyde to make an appearance on the East Coast, so Clara had insisted on this trip to Boston to be here for the ceremony.

“Don’t worry, love. Your brother shouldn’t be too hard to spot among this refined crowd.” After all, how many men wore their hair in a braid down their back? Presumably Clyde would have left his buckskins and hunting knife at home, but one could never be quite certain where Clyde was concerned. Clyde Endicott had never been quite domesticated.

“There he is!” Clara abandoned her customary decorum and raced across the spacious chamber to fling herself into her brother’s outstretched arms.

“Hello, Clara,” Clyde said. “Still married to this hothead?”

She laughed. "Ever since his company became the primary shareholder of the Baltimore & New York railway, I get free tickets to the first class car. So I can't leave him or I'm back to riding in steerage."

Daniel tried to bite back a smile and held out a hand out to shake with Clyde. "Congratulations on your award. I doubt any other recipient has ever given so much of their own blood and sweat in pursuit of a cause."

"I can't speak for recipients in the past, but three of us are getting it this year," Clyde said. "One is getting it for figuring out a way to kill the beetles that were destroying the cotton crop. Far more notable is the fellow who got it for his sculptures of the female form. He did the first purely nude sculptures to be accepted into an American museum. Simply fabulous. We must go see them while I am out east."

As was typical for Clyde, he appeared to be trying to get a rise out of Clara, whose pretty little face blushed scarlet, but she refused to rise to the bait. "Don't look at me," Clara said. "It isn't anything I have not already seen."

Daniel drained a glass of champagne, relishing the opportunity to watch Clara reunite with her brother. Within a single minute their childhood dynamic had snapped back into place, with Clyde teasing Clara as she valiantly put up a fight with that delicate grace which was so much a part of her character. The years fell away as Clyde recounted his travels through Mexico and plans for a trip to the Pacific Islands. Clara provided Clyde with details about their children, Matthew and Lily, supplying him with a miniature photograph and stories of their brilliance.

"And what of you, Clara?" Clyde asked. "What is new with you?"

Clara shrugged, always a little reluctant to talk about herself. "I still play the piano, and have started composing a bit more," she said. "Lately I have been trying to twist Daniel's arm into letting me visit once again with Alex Banebridge. You remember Bane, don't you?"

Daniel's mouth compressed into a hard line. He still had difficulty thinking of Bane without resentment, but Clyde appeared to harbor no such animosity.

“Bane? Of course. How is he doing? Still prettier than a Greek god?”

Clara shrugged. “I have no idea, since he refuses to see me. In all this time, I’ve had only one skimpy letter from Bane. Some sort of nonsense about trying to protect me, when I know very well he moves about freely, so I don’t see why he and Daniel are conspiring to keep us apart. Not a night has gone by that I don’t pray for his well-being.”

“Last time I saw the scoundrel I was digging a bullet out of his belly, so let’s hope he is doing better than that.”

“What is this I hear about digging bullets out of the abdomens of scoundrels?” A man wearing the robes of a Harvard professor interjected himself into their group. A neatly trimmed Van Dyke beard framed the refined features of the middle-aged gentleman. “Somehow only Clyde Endicott could toss off a grisly line with such nonchalance.”

“Professor Van Bracken!” Clyde said with a hearty laugh. Clyde made the necessary introductions, noting that Professor Van Bracken had been his English professor his first year at Harvard.

“I was brand new to the profession,” Professor Van Bracken said, “and I was still a bit in awe of having the famous Reverend Endicott’s son in my class. That was before I saw his scandalous poetry.”

An innocent smile flashed across Clyde’s face. “What scandalous poetry?” Professor Van Bracken leaned closer to Clara. “The assignment was to write a poem in iambic pentameter featuring Greek mythology. Your brother substituted the satyrs and nymphs with the names of Harvard faculty and their wives. Almost got the boy expelled.”

The guilty smile on Clyde’s face bore witness to the story. “I would have been tossed out on my rear if Van Bracken had not stood up for me in front of the dean.”

“Let me be certain I understand,” Daniel said with a straight face. “While I was shoveling coal into a furnace, you were writing dirty poems. And now you are the person Harvard is showering with honors?”

Clyde shrugged helplessly. “Talent will out.”

Daniel snagged another flute of champagne for himself and Clara. “Remind me to have our son apply to Yale when the time comes,” he said wryly.

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Professor Van Bracken watched the trio leave. A triumphant surge coursed through his body, but he prevented any sign of it from disturbing the polite mask he had perfected over the decades.

For at long last, Professor Edward Van Bracken had finally discovered something Bane truly cared about.

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