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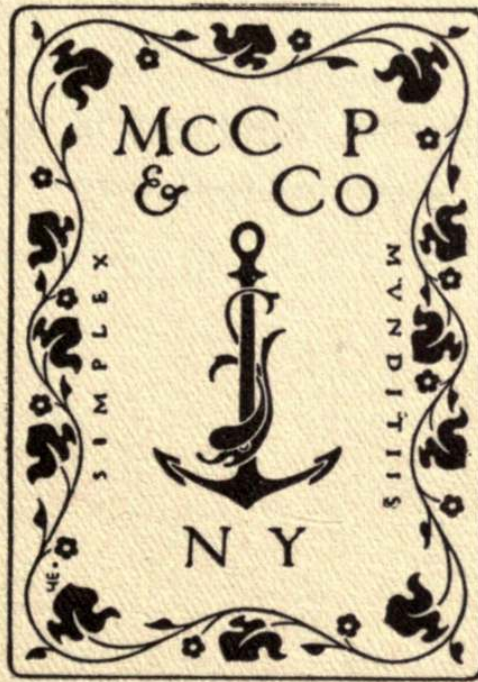
THE GIRL FROM HOME

The Girl from Home

A STORY OF HONOLULU

By

ISOBEL STRONG



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MCMV

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To my friend
Jeannette Norris

Therese's Sentiments
Tewitz

Feb '86

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CHAPTER ONE

The Arrival

IT is strange to think," said the younger woman as the two stood leaning over the railing of the ship, "that this beautiful land will be my home. I may spend a whole long lifetime in this country that is so new to me now."

"Your future home is prettier than this," said her friend. "The Huapala plantation is on another island — Maui. You will have a waterfall for a near neighbour, high mountains and a view that cannot be beaten in the whole kingdom."

"I have often thought," said Florence, "that the more noble and awe-inspiring nature is, the more lonely you feel."

"Well, you will have company, too — any number of agreeable men riding in to see you from the other plantations — nice, clean Englishmen, mostly younger sons. There won't be many women, but I guess you can stand that — I could."

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“Mr. Sprague said he had some good horses.”

“If you are fond of riding you will be happy,” replied Mrs. Landry. “They say plantation life is pleasant enough, but it isn’t Honolulu. Oh,” she sighed, “I have been so homesick I could hardly bear it. I hate cold places and heavy cloth dresses and stout boots and kid gloves. My dear, I descended to the ignominy of flannels! Nothing short of pneumonia drove me to it. Oh, when I felt the first warm breath of the tropics — when I could come out on deck in my first crinkly, crackly, white linen, I felt I was nearing home!”

The gown she wore carried in every crisp fold the unmistakable stamp of fashion. Her figure was of that perfect proportion shop people call “stock-size,” the thirty-six bust and forty-two skirt that is advertised for in cloak models, and though undeniably handsome, it bore too great a resemblance to a fashion-plate. The nipped-in waist, the straight back, the long line from the belt to the instep were as stiff and uncompromising as though cut out of the last issue of the *Elite du Monde*. Her hair, a little too brilliantly golden, showed satiny coils under her smart, straw hat, and her face, protected from the sun’s rays by a white gauze veil, was faultless in drawing and might have been beautiful were it not marred by the mocking expression of her yellow eyes, as hard and as bright as topaz.

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The younger woman as she stood looking eagerly out over the water was a strong contrast to Mrs. Landry. The one was a product of art, self-contained, a woman of the world ; the other was unaffectedly girlish and simple. She was not so tall as Mrs. Landry, and her figure, though slighter, was more rounded and graceful. She wore a plain blue sailor-suit, but there were touches of dainty individuality about her dress. The large, white collar turned back from her throat over a scarlet, knotted 'kerchief; the silver belt matching the buckles in her high-heeled shoes; even the hat pins of large silver balls, and the red band on her straw sailor were distinctly characteristic. The blues and reds in her costume harmonized with her own vivid tints. There was vitality in every ripple and curl of her bright brown hair, worn in a figure eight, low upon her neck. Her eyes, sparkling with interest and excitement, deepened from blue to black with varying moods, while her colour, clear and fresh as a child's, came and went, leaving her pale and flushed by turns. The expression of her face was trusting and frank; but the slightly aquiline curve of her small nose, and the firm line of her rounded chin redeemed it from any sign of weakness. In moments of animation a faint, almost imperceptible change passed over her face, a quiver of the nostril, a momentary trembling of the lips, showing a high-strung and sensi-

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tive spirit, a nature capable of intense feeling whether of suffering or of pleasure.

“Have you always lived here?” she asked of Mrs. Landry.

“I came out to be married, just as you are doing now,” replied the widow. “It was ten years ago, and I was very young. But I don’t want to remember any previous existence. I wish I were a real Hawaiian, that I might call old Diamond Head mine. I am so sentimental that I know when I die you will find Diamond Head engraved on my heart.”

As the steamer sped onward through the blue water, the noble headland that guards the entrance to Honolulu loomed up grandly against the trade-wind sky.

“You will love Diamond Head,” continued Mrs. Landry. “Love it as the Japanese love Fujiyama. After the rains there are little rivers running down its sides in all those cracks and crevices. It is beautiful in the early morning when it is grey and shadowy and vague and misty; and in the afternoon — it faces the west you see — it is splendid in the full light of the setting sun. But oh, how can I describe it by moonlight! It looks better from the shore — along there — you see that clean sweep of beach? That is Waikiki. From any house along there Diamond Head is glorious. At night, when it is in sil-

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houette, it has the outlines of a recumbent figure covered by a shroud. You can see the head, the hump where the hands are clasped and a smaller hump where the feet stick up, and over all is the shroud that flows down — down — that is the sides you know. Some day we will go and explore. There are caves in Diamond Head where old Hawaiian chiefs and warriors are buried. Oh, there are so many things to see in Honolulu, and one never, never sees them.”

“Why not?” asked Florence.

“Because you are dancing and riding and driving and playing tennis and flirting, and find life too exciting. Oh, I’m glad to be home.”

“I was afraid,” said the girl kindly, “that you might find it sad coming back.”

“You mean about my husband’s death? Well, I *was* sad for a year and a half. I wore mourning till I’m sick of the very sight of black. Think of crêpe in the tropics! Poor, old Joshua! My husband was a good deal older than I, you know. He was ill a long time before he died. Not suffering, but just moping around the house. Oh, the dreary hours I’ve spent, sitting by his bedside holding his hand!”

“Poor man!” said Florence. “He must have loved you.”

“He loved me,” said Mrs. Landry, “but it wasn’t al-

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together affection. He wanted to know where I was. As long as he had hold of me he knew I was there."

"He and my father were old friends, weren't they?"

"They went to school together, or something," said the widow. "I know Joshua used to talk a great deal about Mr. Van Voorhis, and when he made his business trips to the coast your father would put him up at his club and all that."

"I know papa was so glad you were coming down on the same steamer," said Florence. "Indeed, he hurried me up to go sooner than I had intended so that I might be under your charge. It has been awfully nice for me," she added, smiling.

"I never did chaperon before," said Mrs. Landry, not too cordially. "It's an entirely new rôle for me, but you haven't given much trouble so far and I suppose Mr. Sprague will come out on the pilot boat, and then my duties will be over."

"I hope he will come to meet me," said Florence, the quick flush deepening in her cheeks. "I'm getting very nervous. It is such a new and strange experience, and not at all like what I expected. I don't suppose anything ever is, really. But I've seen so little of the world. That is a pretty place," she went on, after a pause. "Are those little white things houses far up on the slope of that

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mountain? The people who live there must have a wonderful view of the sea."

"That is Punchbowl," said Mrs. Landry. "It is hollow on top where a volcano used to be. Some day it will break out again, very likely, and sweep us all into the sea. Away off there to the left are the Waianui; we always call them the Delectable Mountains."

"I think," said Florence, "that from here Diamond Head looks like a Sphinx. That outward sweep of what you call the shroud might be her paws, and she is keeping guard over the town."

"Now, you see," said Mrs. Landry delightedly, "you're getting poetical already about Diamond Head. Oh, you will love it!"

"I never saw a whole city at once before," said Florence. "When you near San Francisco, from the bay it is beautiful with all its hills, especially at night, lit up against the western sky. But you only see the half. Here you can look at the whole place in a sweet little bunch of green, with the tops of the houses peeping through. See how it thins out on this side toward Diamond Head and over there toward the Delectable Mountains, and straggles up the side of Punchbowl. You see it all, so quiet and peaceful."

"My dear, that quiet, peaceful place is buzzing like a bee-hive," said Mrs. Landry. "Central is ringing up the

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town. Butcher and baker and candlestick-maker, they are all excited over the prospect of getting their mail, and hearing news of the outside world. They only receive their letters once a month."

"Do you mean to say the telephone people ring up?"

"Yes, indeed. Central rings you up if a sailing ship comes in, or the King's boat wins a yacht race, or a missionary's wife has a baby. You don't miss anything in Honolulu. Really, Central is a comfort. You can ask him what time it is, and how to cook squid, and sometimes I've just rung him up for company in the middle of the night when I was sitting up with Joshua. Of course, it isn't always the same person, but Central is sure to be friendly and chirpy, and as full of gossip as a naval officer, and no one can say more than that. So, if ever you are in doubt, ring up Central. Just now the lines are busy, I can tell you. They are asking if Mr. Sprague's *fiancée* is on the *Suez*, and has the lovely widow returned. They are asking —"

"Who won the prize-fight?"

It was the voice of the pilot who shouted his question from the rope-ladder, puffing and blowing, as friendly hands pulled him over the side of the ship. The passengers gathered in an excited group about him.

"Who won the prize-fight?" he shouted again.

"John L. Sullivan," was the answer.

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"Ho, ho!" he cried. "I've won fifty on that."

A frail looking woman who had been ill nearly the whole trip pushed forward and asked anxiously: "Is the man-of-war *Adams* in port?"

"Expect her in every day," said the pilot, "but she ain't sighted yet. She is considerably overdue already."

"My husband is on board," said the woman, who had turned very pale. "Is there a letter for Mrs. Worthing?"

"No, ma'am," he answered. "I'm sorry, but the only letter I've got is for Miss Van Voorhis." Florence stepped forward impulsively. "Is that you, miss?" he said. "I'm glad to make your acquaintance. Welcome to Honolulu. Here's the letter," and he pushed his way through the group of buzzing passengers to take up a proud position on the bridge.

Florence tore open her envelope with trembling fingers, and after a glance at the letter, handed it to Mrs. Landry. Scrawled across a card were these words:

"Dearest Florence. Unexpectedly detained. Witness lawsuit. Go to hotel. Meet you there. Walter."

"It reads like a telegram," said the widow.

"It is very disappointing," said Florence. Her sensitive lips were trembling. "You'll come with me to the hotel, won't you? It's miserable to arrive all alone, and go on shore by yourself. Even at home I hated to go anywhere alone, and here it is all so new and strange."

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“Pouf!” said Mrs. Landry. “Just take a carriage — they call it an ‘express’ here, Heaven knows why — there will be plenty on the wharf. You’ll drive straight to the hotel, that’s all you have to do. I’d go with you, of course, only some friends will be down to meet me and I’ve made other arrangements. But, really, you shouldn’t mind. Mr. Sprague will be there to meet you and then you’ll be all right.”

“Oh, Mrs. Landry!” cried the girl suddenly. “What if I shouldn’t like him?”

The widow started. “My dear!” she cried, in a tone between commiseration and agreeable excitement. “Aren’t you sure? Have you any doubts?”

“I don’t know,” said Florence; “it’s so long since I saw him, and I’m afraid I’ve been thinking too much of getting away from home. It has been a sad year for me and I missed my mother so much.” She looked up at the white clouds resting on the summit of Punchbowl and sighed. “It’s beautiful here, and I thought it would be restful and far away. But — but now I — you see, I really don’t know him very well.”

“Well, if you don’t love him, don’t marry him,” said Mrs. Landry. “Of course, he belongs to a good, old missionary family, and will come into a share of the Huapala plantation when his father dies, but he’s only a *luna* now, and when I first saw you I felt you were cut

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out for a better fate than being the wife of an overseer on a sugar plantation. How did you come to meet him?"

"When my mother was living," said Florence, "we went, she and I, to the Calaveras big trees for a trip. I had just left school that I might be with her, for we were getting frightened about her health. We met Mr. Sprague, who was on a vacation, and he was so kind to mother. I didn't take it very seriously then, but we kept writing to each other and I never saw anybody at all, as we lived in the country for my mother's health. Then, when she died, I was so lonely — and so — well, he wrote and asked me —"

"He proposed by letter, didn't he? I remember perfectly when he sent you your engagement ring by the purser of the *Suez*."

"Oh! did you know about that?"

"My dear, everybody knows everything in the tropics. He wanted to send it by some trustworthy person who would give it into your own hands, and he was so excited over it he told Dick Leigh-Garrett who told me, and the purser was so proud of his commission he told me, and I told everybody I knew."

Florence looked distressed.

"My dear," went on Mrs. Landry, "you needn't think that this whole town — look at it nestling at the foot of Punchbowl looking so innocent and quiet — you

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needn't think they don't know all about you. They know you are coming down to marry Walter Sprague and live on Maui, and they have counted to a cent what your income will be."

"It will be a new sensation for me to be talked about, or even noticed. I've lived such a quiet life at the ranch, where the few neighbours we had were too far away to trouble about us."

"Well, you must be prepared for the worst. That little green spot, that bouquet of gardens and lawns, is a hot-bed of gossip. They'll tear you limb from limb; they'll gnaw your bones, and the prettier you are the more ravenous they grow. I am used to it," she added, self-consciously. "And I am sure they are talking me over this very minute. They know the handsome widow is coming back from San Francisco, with a mountain of trunks — they know my only errand there was clothes. They're picking out my victims in advance, and speculating on whom I shall marry; 'catch,' they'll call it."

"I should think you'd hate it," said Florence; "and hate them. I'm glad my home will be on Maui."

"My dear," said Mrs. Landry, laughing, "it is the joy of my life to make Honolulu sit up. My time is coming now, and I intend to keep the old place busy. The missionaries will open their eyes when I come out of my

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shell, or my chrysalis, or whatever it is that a dreary little caterpillar, all in mourning, comes out of when it changes into a perfectly beautiful butterfly. Look at those five ships all in a row, pointing their noses toward the shore." She put up her marine glass. "There's the good old *Mohawk* — a lovely deck for balls. That snub-nosed one is German — the decks are all cut up with iron and brass pivots, and littered over with guns — no fun at all for dancing. One English, another American — new arrivals. I'm not sure about them, but they look nice and roomy, and old-fashioned. What flag is that? Blue cross on white. Oh, I know! Russian. Now look — there are five men-of-war, full of charming men, with nothing on earth to do but make themselves agreeable to pretty dames — like us, let me add, modestly."

They were slowly nearing the dock. The wharf, roofed over and piled high with loose coal, stacks of bananas, barrels of sugar, heavy boxes, crates and cases, was a confused tangle of trams, carts, wagons, mules, and donkeys. Along the edge stood a fringe of waiting people, looking, at a distance, as though they were all dressed in white. Their voices came over the water, loud shouts from the men, shrill calls from the women that were answered by the passengers of the nearing ship.

"Who won the prize-fight?"

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“John L. Sullivan.”

There were cheers from the wharf; some of the men leaped and danced, others threw their hats in the air. There were more calls.

“How’s Mary?”

“We’ve had a perfectly lovely trip.”

“Say, the *Dunotter Castle* was wrecked on Ocean Island!”

As the ship drew nearer Florence eagerly watched the scene. It interested her to see that many of the faces were brown; a rich, warm tint that contrasted with the pale colour of the white people.

Mrs. Landry plucked her sleeve. “Come over on the other side,” she said, “and see the sailors.”

A smart man-o’-war’s boat was approaching the ship. All the oars rose in the air like clock-work as it curved gracefully beside the steamer. A young officer in white uniform came up over the side to the deck. He stopped to smile at Mrs. Landry.

“Hurry along, Hammy!” she cried gaily, “and then come back and talk to us. That’s Hamilton Todd,” Mrs. Landry explained to Florence. “He’s one of my Woolly Horses — that’s what I always call a nice, young man. Poor Joshua used to get so annoyed. He’d say: ‘You’re like a child with a woolly horse — always ready to throw the old one away when you’ve broken it to pieces,

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and glad to get a new one.' Well, Hammy *is* a woolly horse, you know. He hasn't an atom of brains, and he uses the most ridiculously long words, but he's a nice, useful fetch-and-carry so I — oh, you dear Hammy, it *is* good to see you again!"

The young man shook hands enthusiastically. He was extremely tall and thin, with a long neck, and a kind, youthful face, much given to blushes.

"This is my friend, Miss Van Voorhis," said Mrs. Landry; "and I want you to be very nice to her for my sake."

"I have had an acquaintance of considerable standing with your future — with er — Mr. Sprague," said Lieutenant Todd, bowing to Florence, "and I consider it an occasion of unusual felicity to be the first one to — er — know you."

"Thank you," said Florence, as the three walked over to the other side. The ship was fairly alongside, and there was a great running and shouting and throwing of ropes as the ship made fast to the wharf and the gangway was lowered. More people in carriages were coming in crowds. Everybody was calling and screaming back and forth, some in Hawaiian, some in English.

"What a pretty colour the natives are," said Florence. "I thought they would look like mulattoes, but they don't a bit. They're not red, like the Indians, or yellow,

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like the Chinese, but the prettiest brown I ever saw. Oh! Do look at that nice boy in white, with a straw hat — isn't he beautiful? and those girls, laughing — see, they're throwing wreaths."

She stepped forward to watch the scene, while Hammy whispered to Mrs. Landry in some agitation.

"It's too bad of Mr. Sprague" said the widow in a low voice. "Go back to your ship at once — it'll be some time before we're docked — make your silly old reports — and be at the hotel to meet Miss Van Voorhis when she gets there. Tell her I'll be up this evening. I just can't go now. The Bonner girls are on the wharf and Dick is waiting for me. Fly, there's a dear boy, and do as I tell you."

CHAPTER TWO

Meeting Walter

MRS. LANDRY was welcomed by a lively party on the wharf, and whirled away in a carriage full of people. The acquaintances Florence had made on the steamer departed one by one, too busy and excited to do more than wave a friendly hand to the girl who stood so forlornly by the gangway. Mrs. Worthing, the wife of the naval officer, was tenderly helped into a carriage and drove off with the ship's doctor.

The air was heavy with the heat and the combined smells of sugar, seaweed, coal, and ripe bananas. One carriage lingered on the almost deserted wharf. "Want an express?" the driver called as Florence stepped slowly down the gangway, her heart beating fast with fright and nervousness. She nodded and climbed in.

"My name's Quinn," said the man turning to address the young girl, who sat in the back seat with her

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hands tightly clasped as they drove through the unfamiliar streets. "And if ye ring up the Royal Stables, just ask if Dan Quinn's on the stand, and I'll be proud to drive ye."

"Thank you," she said, for the man was evidently friendly, and though his manner was unusual she could see that he had no intention of presuming.

"That old building, jammed in among the shops," he went on, with the ease of one who had driven countless parties of tourists, "is the Bethel Church that was built by the early missionaries. There were heaps of sailors here in them days, for Honolulu was a great whaling station. I've heard tell as how you could walk for a mile on the bay, just stepping from one whaling ship to another. Old Mr. Tyler, he's living yet, mighty rich and prosperous, got the whalers to donate barrels of whale-oil to the mission, and he'd store it and sell it, for he was a thrifty old Yankee; and so he started that church and the beginnings of his fortune at the same time. Tyler is a good old missionary name in Honolulu. You can't throw a stone in this town without hitting a Tyler. There's Tyler the banker, and Tyler Brothers the wholesale fruit and provision merchants, and a raft of young Tylers off at Harvard University."

The streets through which they drove were narrow, and the "express" bumped over the cobble-stones.

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The shops were low, of red brick, with wide awnings stretched out over the pavement. Here and there a tree covered with bright flowers thrust its branches over a stone wall, or a scarlet-leaved creeper struggled through a crack or crevice, filling the air with colour and fragrance. In Florence's state of agitation and anxiety she unconsciously received impressions that were stamped upon her mind forever. The aroma of browning coffee as they passed May's grocery; the heavy scent of gardenia from a group of native girls decked with flowers, who stood in a laughing group on the street corner, flirting with a couple of rakish-looking Chinamen, were perfumes that ever after recalled that first glimpse of Honolulu.

"This is Fort Street," said Quinn. "It's one of the first laid out here, that's why it's so narrow. It shows the intelligence of the early missionaries to make a street like this in the tropics. All the rest of the town has wide avenues it's a pleasure to drive on."

Fort Street, with its one line of horse-car tracks down the centre, was crowded with vehicles; prosperous missionaries in private carriages; basket phaetons full of women and children in starched summer clothes, carrying parasols; smart dog-carts driven by young Englishmen from the outlying plantations; expresses filled with naval officers; old carryalls, tied together

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with rope and sinnet, crowded with hilarious natives, garlanded with wreaths.

“Everybody’s in town,” said the driver. “You see it’s steamer day, and they all come in for their mail. This street is quiet as the tomb thirty days in the month and then, on steamer day, it’s like what you see it now.”

“Will we soon be there?” asked Florence.

“Right around the corner,” said Danny briskly. “Did you notice the queer dresses the native women wear? The new-comers always ask about them. Some say they look like what you ladies call a ‘Mother Hubbard,’ but you see, when the missionaries arrived here the native people didn’t wear much of anything, so the white ladies handed ’em over their — excuse me, ma’am, but that’s what they did — their nightgowns, and they’ve followed that pattern ever since. That stone wall you see at the end of the street,” he went on, as they turned a corner, “is the palace grounds. Our gate is on this side. Here we are. And I warrant ye never saw a prettier hotel.”

They drove through a beautiful garden set out with flower beds and palms.

“That pagoda thing,” said Quinn, “is the bandstand, and ye’ll hear some fine music in it, for they always play the night the steamer comes in, and have a little *randy-vow* at the hotel.”

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The building was large, with deep, wide verandas, screened in with brilliant creepers. The additions built on gave the irregular homely look of a place that had grown with the needs of the people. There were many carriages drawn up before the wide steps. Florence looked out hoping to see Mr. Sprague, but though she recognized a number of her fellow passengers among the people who were coming and going on the veranda and about the entrance, he was not there.

"I don't like to get down in all that crowd, Mr. Quinn," she said.

"Right you are, miss, I should have thought of that, myself. We'll just go around to the other side." And he turned into a road that curved about the hotel, drawing rein at another entrance. A young man came running down the steps to meet the carriage. It was not the person she expected to see, but Florence was glad enough to recognize Lieutenant Todd, who helped her out.

"I've been watching for you," he said, "from the upstairs veranda."

Danny's fare was twenty-five cents, which Florence held up to him with a trembling hand.

"You've been very kind, Mr. Quinn," she said, "I'm much obliged to you."

"Come upstairs," said Mr. Todd, "it's cool and

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pleasantly refreshing there, and no people about, so we can wait very comfortably."

Florence followed the young man up the broad stairs, through cool, darkened corridors, out upon the veranda, where he pushed a rocking-chair to a corner shaded by yellow creepers and the green tops of giant bamboo.

"Mr. Todd!" cried Florence desperately, "where is Mr. Sprague? He said he would be here to meet me. I can't understand it."

"Oh," said Hammy, "Mr. Sprague, of course — well, he wasn't very well last night —"

"Is he ill?" asked Florence; "is anything the matter?"

"No, no," stammered Hammy, "there is nothing the matter with him."

"He wrote that he was witness in a lawsuit or something," said Florence. "But even then he should have sent some one to meet me. The wife of the American Consul —"

"Mr. Burney is a bachelor," said Hammy, talking quickly. "A most estimable man, though at present unmarried. His manners are somewhat uncouth, certainly, but I have heard him described as a rough diamond. He wears a linen duster —"

"I don't want to hear about Mr. Burney, I want to

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hear about Mr. Sprague. You are keeping something from me, Mr. Todd. Has there been an accident? Is he hurt?"

There were several rooms opening out upon the veranda where they sat. Before one door was a large Japanese screen. A curious sound came from behind it of people angrily expostulating in whispers. Mr. Todd raised his voice in some irritation and went on:

"But I was telling you, Miss Van Voorhis," he floundered, "I was about to explain to you, when you interrupted me; just when I was describing the manners and customs of — er — our American Consul —"

A chair overturned in the room noisily, and a voice was heard to say:

"I *will* speak to lady — my lovely bride!"

Florence jumped to her feet. "What is that!" she cried.

The Japanese screen fell forward with a crash, disclosing three hot, perspiring young men, locked together in what appeared at first to be a sort of wrestling-match. At sight of the girl, standing transfixed with horror and indignation, two of the men drew off a step, cruelly embarrassed, while the third swayed unsteadily for a moment and then dropped into a chair. In spite of his pale face, his bloodshot eyes, and wildly dishevelled hair, Florence recognized her intended

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husband, Walter Sprague. His white duck clothes were crumpled, he wore no collar, and his friends had evidently been helping him into his coat when the screen fell. He held out his arms toward Florence and tried to rise.

“My bride!” he said thickly, “kiss me, my sweet —”

One of the young men pushed him back into the chair.

“I give you my word, Florence —” He was evidently making a tremendous effort. “I have been extremely unwell. I have a weakness of the heart; I had a bad attack this morning. Didn’t want to distress you, but it’s all right now. Married this evening — ’Merican Consulate, rooms engaged. Come and kiss me, my dearest one.”

Lieutenant Todd was fairly trembling with embarrassment and agitation. The two young men, who were quite sober, had evidently acted the parts of good Samaritans, and were deeply regretting it.

Florence stood looking wildly at them, her hands clasped tightly against her breast. She drew in her breath with a little gasp, and a quiver crossed her face as though she were wincing from a series of threatened blows. She made an inarticulate sound in her throat and glanced appealingly at Hammy.

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“He will not appear at such a disadvantage,” said Mr. Todd, “when he’s — he’s recovered. You shouldn’t judge him now, Miss Van Voorhis, really. You know the ship was expected yesterday and he was going to be married to-day, and his friends invited him to partake of spirits. I partook myself,” he added honestly, his face suffused with crimson, “anybody would partake under the circumstances.”

“You talk like a damned missionary,” cried Mr. Sprague, “with your partaking and partooking. I got drunk, Florence, that’s the truth. Give you my word it never happened in my life before. I’d have been all right only my head ached this morning and I took a milk-punch. Punch increases the heart’s action, and I give you my word —”

“Don’t — don’t talk to me —” cried Florence.

Here, to the consternation of the other men, Mr. Sprague burst into tears. He was a slender man, with a drooping black moustache, and full, heavy-lidded black eyes. Under ordinary circumstances he might have laid claim to a certain amount of good looks; but pale, tearful, with no collar, his black hair plastered to his forehead and hanging into his eyes, he was an object of pity.

“Don’t go back on me, Florence,” he sobbed. “You are my lode-star. I’ve got the house all ready. I can’t

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go back there alone — I couldn't face the boys. Can't you see, yourself, it's your duty to go? You promised and you ought to keep your promise. Oh!" he cried, weeping afresh, "you are my lode-star!" He wagged his head from side to side, dolefully mopping his swollen eyes.

"Oh, take him away!" cried Florence desperately. "Mr. Todd, take him away!"

Hammy brightened up at the prospect of definite action.

"He shall not stay here a minute longer," he said. "We will get him away at once."

The two men nodded significantly.

"Come, Miss Van Voorhis," said Hammy, taking her by the arm and leading her into the corridor. "I am going to engage a room for you — you go there and rest."

"Florence! My bride!" cried Mr. Sprague, staggering to his feet. "Hear me — I give you my word —"

The two young men thrust him violently back into his chair.

"Don't pay any attention to him," said Hammy. "You are going to lie down in your room and rest."

"But I cannot," said Florence. "He might come and try to speak to me!"

"Stay here a minute," said Hammy, in the masculine

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voice of authority. The girl instinctively obeyed, cowering back in the corner of the hall. He returned in a moment, followed by a Chinaman carrying a key. Hammy spoke more directly under the stress of action.

“Come along,” he said. “I have engaged number forty-seven — quiet little room. Here it is — Lee will show it to you.”

“You are so good,” said Florence. “I can’t thank you — but oh! I’m so frightened — what if Mr. Sprague refuses to go?”

“He’ll go, all right,” said Hammy. “Don’t you worry about that.”

“But he might come back.”

“I have an idea!” said Hammy. “You go in and lie down, and when I have him safely off the premises and there is no danger of his returning, I will come to your door and knock four times. You needn’t answer. It’s just a signal to relieve your mind. Now, Lee, you look after this young lady. Good-bye, and don’t worry. Oh —” he ran back, “what about your trunks?”

“I forgot all about them,” said Florence, “and my valise is on the ship. But don’t trouble about them, Mr. Todd. I don’t care about them at all. I don’t care about anything. I never, never want to see that man again and I don’t know where my keys are —”

“I’ll get your trunks,” said Hammy. “No custom-

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house here. I'll send them up at once, but I promise you I won't do a thing till Mr. Sprague is disposed of. I will personally supervise that business myself. I leave you to Lee," and he went off briskly down the stairs.

The Chinaman unlocked the corner room and showed Florence in.

"Welly nice," he said. "Bath loom closs hall. Lil piece velanda belong you."

Florence waited for him to go, repressing her impatience, while he hung a blue hammock from stout hooks in the veranda posts, pulled out a rocking-chair and arranged a Japanese screen to his liking. She forced herself to smile and nod, when he looked to her for approval. She watched his white-robed figure moving reluctantly down the hall and then, turning into the hot, darkened room filled with a strange perfume, she threw herself on the bed, crying as she had not cried since she was a child.

There was the sound of a step in the corridor and then, on the door close beside her, came four distinct knocks.

CHAPTER THREE

A New Friend

FLORENCE was aroused from a deep sleep of fatigue and exhausted nerves, by the arrival of her valise and three trunks. She looked on, bewildered and half-awake, while Lee turned on the electric lights, helped bring in the trunks, paid the porters, and then asked about dinner. It was long past the hour. He had tapped at her door several times, but there was no answer.

“I don’t want anything to eat, thank you,” said Florence.

She had thought for a moment, on waking, that she was back again in her old room at home, on the California ranch; but the unaccustomed heat, the heavy perfume and the Chinaman’s voice, brought her back to reality.

“You take bath,” said Lee encouragingly. “Plenty cold water. Bye-and-bye you feel better. I bring you velly nice, lil dinner. I come back pretty soon · now you hully up.”

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When Lee returned, laden with a large tray, he found Florence much refreshed, though still very pale. He drew up a little table by the hammock on the veranda where he laid out her meal. An alligator pear with mayonnaise, broiled pigeon on toast, a glass of iced-tea, and a dish of fruit.

“More better you stop here,” said Lee. “Too muchee talk downstairs. Honolulu too muchee talk.”

Even the Chinaman knew her miserable story.

“Missy Splague come here I nick him down stairs,” said Lee valiantly.

“Never mind, Lee,” she answered, but all the same his friendliness was cheering. In California she had been accustomed to Chinese servants from her childhood, and it seemed homelike to hear the pidgin English.

He busied himself on the veranda, lighting a number of coloured lanterns that swung from a line between the posts, and then came back to remove the tray.

“Band consit to-night,” he said. “You look over velanda, see plenty people.” He turned down the lights in her room. “You look out see everybolly; nobolly see you.”

The young girl sighed. There must be a great deal of gossip abroad to make Lee so solicitous. She drew her chair close to the railing, pushing back a long branch, heavy with waxen-white stephanotis, and looked down

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into the garden sparkling with lanterns and Hawaiian torches. There were green benches under the palms; here the humbler class — sailors, native men and girls — were already congregating. Carriage after carriage rolled up to the entrance of the hotel. Florence could see the people getting out in the full glare of the electric light, the men in evening dress and straw hats, the women in muslins and lace, without wraps. They all seemed to know one another very well, talking and laughing, and calling out in English and Hawaiian as they had done at the wharf.

Suddenly the band began to play. She could see the musicians plainly, broad-shouldered, stout Hawaiian men in white uniforms and brass buttons. The leader, evidently a German from his sweeping yellow moustache and whiskers, waved his baton with a firm air of command. Florence expected to hear the notes of a village band, and was startled by the noble burst of harmony that swelled from the little kiosk. The piece they were playing was evidently a native air, with a simple, tender melody and strongly-marked rhythm. In the garden below, the lamps and torches lit up the flower beds and winding paths, where sailors in white uniforms mingled with groups of native girls, dressed in gowns of brilliant blue, yellow and crimson; from the veranda came little bursts of laughter,

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and at every pause of the music the clatter of voices burst forth anew.

Florence leaned her head on her clasped hands and thought of her home in California, the old ranch house that she had known from her earliest childhood. She recalled, in a passion of homesickness, the peace and beauty of Glen Una, the aromatic air, redolent of pine; the grapes growing on the hillside; the plums lying thick as a purple carpet under the trees.

Suddenly the Japanese screen moved aside, and Mrs. Landry burst in, sparkling from head to foot in span-gled silver net. Her too yellow hair elaborately coiled and puffed was held in place by numerous jewelled pins. Her glittering gown fell into the obviously graceful lines of a well-done fashion plate.

“Oh, you poor child!” she cried. “I tried my best to get here earlier, but I simply couldn’t tear myself away. Wasn’t it awful?”

“Wasn’t what awful?” asked Florence.

“Why, you, of course — and Mr. Sprague. You needn’t look so horrified. I told you there were no secrets in the tropics. I think he treated you shamefully.”

“But how did you hear about it?” asked Florence in dismay.

“My dear, the whole town is ringing with it. But you are well rid of him. Hammy’s outside — can he come in?”

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Come in, Woolly," she cried, "here's Miss Van Voorhis, moping in the dark."

Lieutenant Todd appeared and shook hands as though he were meeting Florence for the first time.

"You needn't look so embarrassed," commented the widow. "You surely oughtn't to be afraid of Miss Van Voorhis after what happened this afternoon. You lost no time in telling about it, any way."

Hammy gasped. "Telling!" he cried. "I never did. . . . I would be incapable of such a . . . oh, Miss Van Voorhis"

The widow laughed maliciously. "Never trust a naval officer," she said. "I know 'em. They're just a pack of old women."

"But, honestly, Miss Van Voorhis," he said, seriously distressed.

"Oh, well! If you didn't tell, Willis and Lance certainly did. They said they held up the poor man while you and Florence pitched into him. Danny Quinn's been saying how shameful it was there was no one to meet the beautiful young liddy but that no-account naval officer, and Lee told the Bonner girls that he would 'nick' Mr. Sprague off the veranda. Oh, my dear! You'll have to brace up to it, and the sooner the better."

"What do you mean?" demanded Florence.

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"Everybody's downstairs now," said the widow. "It's better to see them in a bunch than by driblets."

"Do you mean that you want me to meet all those strange people? I could not."

"But I feel responsible for you," said Mrs. Landry. "You are in my charge. Now, if you follow my advice you'll sail downstairs, and get acquainted with everybody. I'll introduce you to all my Woolly Horses."

"Please don't ask me," said Florence decisively. "I am quite comfortable here, by myself. Go down and dance, and don't worry about me."

"Well," said Mrs. Landry cheerfully, "if you will have it so, we'll look you up later. Come, my hero," and she rustled and tinkled down the hall, followed by Hammy.

Until that moment Florence had, unconsciously, depended upon Mrs. Landry. She had been put under that lady's protection, and, naturally, when trouble came, had looked to her for help. But the pretty, silken reed bent at the lightest touch, and now she felt more desolately alone than ever. She felt the need, at that moment, of a woman friend.

The screen that had shut in the corner of the veranda remained thrust aside, as Mrs. Landry had left it, and Florence saw Mr. Todd approaching from a distance, followed by a short, plump lady in a trailing, grey silk,

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that hung in straight, soft folds from the shoulder, in the native fashion.

“Miss Van Voorhis,” said Hammy, “I hope you will pardon me if I am taking a liberty. But I would like to present to you a very dear friend of mine, Mrs. Ross. Mrs. Ross, Miss Van Voorhis. I — ah — I am sure two such charming ladies should know one another.”

Mrs. Ross sank smiling into the chair that Hammy drew up beside Florence.

“Go back to the dance, Mr. Todd,” she said, “and tell Emma where to find me.”

The stranger spoke in a soft, foreign voice, very musical and low. The shimmer of her grey silk matched the colour of her hair that showed, thickly curling, under a white lace scarf. Although very dark and evidently half or a quarter Hawaiian, her eyes were a bright blue.

Florence had dreaded meeting any of the Honolulu people, though she had not really believed Mrs. Landry's pleasantries about the island gossip. She received Mrs. Ross somewhat formally, and listened to her talk in a cold silence that in no way disconcerted her visitor. In five minutes Florence learned that she was a widow; that she had a son in America; that she was descended from the Kamehamehas, and that she had a niece named Emma.

“She's downstairs dancing now,” she went on. “I

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came to chaperon her. Mr. Todd told me that you were sitting up here alone, and I knew that you had just arrived and were a stranger in Honolulu, so I begged him to let me come up and talk to you."

"You are very good."

The music began again, a wild barbaric theme with a strangely familiar melody running through it.

"I almost seem to know what it is they are playing," said Florence.

"It's Hawaiian music," Mrs. Ross explained "But they always get some bit of an old hymn the missionaries brought here and weave it in with their own music. Doesn't the band play well? We were so lonely when they went away."

"Who?" asked Florence.

"The band boys. They are men, of course, but everybody calls them the band boys. They went up to San Francisco to compete in some big musical affair, and we were so proud for they won the prize. Mr. Berger, he's the leader, you know, had a good deal of trouble with them, they were so popular. They kept giving away their buttons for souvenirs, and people treated them to drinks, and when they got their money they'd hand it over to beggars and tramps. Mr. Kuniakia, a cousin of mine, plays the cornet, and he told me such pathetic stories about poor people in your country. He said many and

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many a time he had given a man a quarter just for a place to sleep. And it seemed so sad to him not to see any cocoanut trees. He told me he walked miles and miles, and didn't find one."

"But they don't grow in California."

"Yes, I know. That's what makes it so hard for the poor people. For, if you are really hungry, you can always eat cocoanuts."

The music suddenly changed from a melodious waltz into the bold, serious notes of an anthem. There was the sound of a general scraping of chairs on the lower veranda.

"What is it?" asked Florence.

"The King," said Mrs. Ross. "Everybody is standing."

"Is that the National air they are playing?"

"Yes. *Hawaii Ponoii* —Hawaii Forever. It's grand, isn't it?"

"I never saw a king," said Florence. "Is he nice looking?" She was beginning to like her friendly visitor.

"Oh, my dear!" she answered. "He is magnificent! Of course he isn't a Kamehameha. The reigning family was extinct when Queen Emma's little boy died. I am descended from Kamehameha by a collateral branch. My grandfather was never addressed by any title but *Alii*; that means chief, you know."

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"It is very interesting," said Florence.

"You see," Mrs. Ross went on, "when the little prince died, Queen Emma his mother was Regent, but, as she was not of royal blood the people did not want her for a ruler. Then they had a general election, just as you have in the United States. It was between Kalakaua, a young prince of good family, and the ex-Queen Emma. It was awfully exciting. After Kalakaua was elected king, he and Queen Emma never met or spoke to each other, though it was years ago, until last Thursday on the *Pawtucket*. I was there myself and saw it."

"Do tell me about it," said Florence, now entirely won over by the kindly half-white.

"Well, you know, Honolulu people had always been careful not to invite them both to the same entertainment. Or, if Queen Emma was asked, she was always told, delicately of course, that the King was coming, and so she stayed away. But the *Pawtucket* people didn't understand island politics, and asked them both. Everybody in town was there, and all the officers from the other ships. They had arranged a throne on the quarter deck with flags and things, the way they always do, and of course, we knew the King was expected. Imagine our feelings when we saw Queen Emma coming over the side! She was given a seat beside the throne, and we all waited. Of course, we told the

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officers of the *Pawtucket* and they were frightened to death. Nobody knew what was going to happen. Then we saw the royal boat coming, and the salute began banging away. His Majesty walked slowly up the deck, and everybody bowed." Mrs. Ross rose to her feet to act the story as she talked, assuming the urbane smile of the King and the respectful homage of the people. "We all watched him going up the companion-way to the quarter deck. Queen Emma was standing like this, very straight and haughty, with ropes of jessamine looped in her hair. We saw the King walk up to her and hold out his hand. She gave him hers. We could not hear what they said, but instead of taking the throne himself he led her to it. She hesitated a moment while we all held our breaths and then, when she took the seat, he bowed low before her, like this, and I declare, we all said afterwards we felt like applauding."

"How splendid of him!" cried Florence. "That was *like* a king. I wish I could see him."

Mrs. Ross jumped up. "Come on, now," she said, "and I will introduce you."

"No, no!" Florence drew back.

"Oh, of course!" said Mrs. Ross. "How stupid of me. I knew you couldn't under the circumstances."

Florence caught her breath. "What do you mean?" she said, rising.

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“Oh!” Mrs. Ross was visibly flustered. “I — nothing — only — about Mr. Sprague, you know.”

“Does everybody know my affairs?” cried the young girl passionately.

“No — no, only the American Consul told me —”

Florence had been choking back her tears with difficulty. She suddenly began to laugh. “The Chinaman said —” she gasped, “the two young men, the American Consul —” and then, with an hysterical cry that was drowned in the clash of music, she fell back in her chair.

Mrs. Ross caught her, laid her on the floor, and ran for water. She sprinkled Florence’s face, unfastened her dress, put a pillow under her head, all the while heaping maledictions on herself for a blundering, stupid fool and calling Florence many sweet Hawaiian names of endearment. Then she sat down beside her on the matting and began gently clawing her arms and shoulders like an amiable cat.

“What *are* you doing?” asked Florence faintly.

“Giving you a *lomi-lomi* — I think they call it ‘massage’ in English — but it isn’t the same thing. It quiets the nerves.”

The petting of the plump, little hands, the sympathy that she had craved, the gentle, feminine influence soon restored Florence to calmness.

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“I’m ashamed of myself, Mrs. Ross,” she murmured.
“But I’ve been upset. It has been a terrible day — ”

“I know, I know,” said the good creature. “It was all my fault. I’m so stupid. Don’t mind me. I didn’t mean to hurt you. I could have bitten my tongue out for saying a word.”

“You’re so good,” said Florence, and, laying her head on the grey-silk lap she cried quietly while Mrs. Ross tenderly picked the hairpins out of her hair.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Ross Family

IT was late that night before Mrs. Ross went home. She had put Florence to bed like a tired child and then sat by her side, patting her arm and shoulder with the soothing *lomi-lomi*. It was then that the last of Florence's reserve melted away and she poured out her heart to the kind little Hawaiian.

She told her of the prune ranch in the Santa Clara Valley where her mother died, the home of her childhood that was a home no more, for it had been given over to the superintendent to live in. He had repainted and repapered it out of all semblance to the place she had loved so well.

She told of the lonely year in San Francisco after her mother's death, when she had lived with her father at a hotel. He was a busy man, engaged in some kind of shipping business she did not understand; the prune ranch was only one of his many interests. The life had

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been so lonely, that she tried visiting relations in Southern California, but the dreariness of that was beyond words, and she was glad to get back to the privacy of her corner room at the hotel. She would have gone on to talk of Mr. Sprague and the difficulties of her present position but Mrs. Ross considerately led the conversation away from agitating subjects, and wandered on to stories of her own youth, when she had known and loved Prince Lunalilo. His death had cast a gentle sadness over her life, and she loved to talk of him and tell stories of his gaiety and humour and popularity. At his death he had been buried with chiefly honours and the firing of guns. Many years after, when the Royal Mausoleum was built they carried his body to lie with the other descendants of Kamehameha, and begged the authorities for another salute of twenty-one guns which was refused. But Heaven remembered, and when the body of the beloved Prince was carried up Nuuanu Valley, a great storm arose, and the thunder pealed twenty-one times.

Mrs. Ross had been maid of honour to Queen Emma when Kamehameha IV. was king; she described the court life of those days, the great doings when the Duke of Edinburgh paid his famous visit to Honolulu in his own man-of-war; the compliments he paid to the beautiful Hawaiians, the dances, the flirtations; prat-

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ting on in her soft foreign voice, gently and soothingly, till the young girl fell asleep.

The next morning Mrs. Ross came again to see her new friend and sat patiently swinging in the hammock, waiting for her to wake. A light breeze, salt from the sea, rustled the leaves and shook out the scent from the clusters of stephanotis.

It was the voice of Mrs. Ross, singing softly to herself in Hawaiian, that finally awoke Florence to her new surroundings.

“Why, Mrs. Ross!” she cried. “How good of you! I dreaded this morning — to wake and find myself alone in a strange place.”

“That’s why I’m here, my dear,” said her friend. “You are to come to my house and breakfast with me, and then we will talk over all our problems.”

Florence was soon dressed and was surprised to find herself almost light-hearted. She put on one of her prettiest gowns, a white lawn elaborately befrilled with ruffles and lace, and her white kid shoes with the silver buckles.

“I didn’t know you were such a pretty girl,” said Mrs. Ross, looking her over admiringly as they started down the hall.

At the head of the stairs they met two tall young women talking and laughing loudly. They were dressed

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in smart, well-fitting divided skirts, with neat riding boots and wore felt hats bound with leather straps. Each carried a silver-mounted whip. Mrs. Ross introduced them as the Misses Bonner of Kauai.

“We’re in town on business,” said the elder frankly, after shaking hands in a boyish fashion with Florence. “Betty, here, is selling her pigs, and I’m looking up the Japanese Commission to get more labourers for the plantation.”

They were tall buxom girls, black-eyed and red-cheeked, with pleasant sun-burnt faces, an open-air breeziness of manner and smiles of engaging impertinence. They looked enough alike to be twins, and as they swaggered down the stairs, clicking their boot heels, and swishing their riding whips, Florence noticed that they wore their hair in longer braids than she had ever seen out of an advertisement. If one started a sentence the other finished it, or they both talked at once in their loud, cheerful voices.

“We’ve just come in the nick of time,” said Polly the eldest.

“To take in all the gaieties —” supplemented Betty.

“We’ll stay over for Rex’s ball —”

“And the dance on the *Mohawk* —”

And then together — “There’s a lot of other things beside!”

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As the party passed the hotel desk the clerk handed Florence a letter.

"The messenger has been waiting for an answer," said the man, "ever since eight o'clock this morning, and it's after ten now."

Florence hesitated.

"Tell him to go away," said Mrs. Ross decisively. "Miss Van Voorhis will send the answer from my house."

Out on the gravelled driveway in front of the hotel a native man was holding, with difficulty, a pair of restive horses, saddled and bridled. They were handsome animals, and Florence looked them over with interest. Round the neck of each horse was a wreath of marigolds.

"Jolly morning for a gallop, isn't it?" said the younger girl, Betty. "I wish you were coming with us."

"Thank you," said Florence, "I love to ride."

With one leap they were sitting astride the saddles, their black divided skirts falling faultlessly, without a wrinkle, on either side of the horse. Florence rather suspected them of showing off, for there was a good deal of rearing and prancing and pawing the air before they saluted, cavalry fashion, wheeled about and galloped away with a thumping of hoofs on the gravel road.

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Florence was looking after them a little enviously when Mrs. Ross called to her that the express was waiting.

“Regular island girls,” she said, talking of the Misses Bonner, as they took their seats and settled back for a pleasant morning drive. “Born and bred on Kauai. They run their own plantation; and it’s a big paying concern.”

“Those two young girls?”

“Oh, there are several others,” said Mrs. Ross, “and they are all exactly alike. One married and went off to America, but her husband died within a year and she came back to Kauai. Another one went for a trip abroad, and brought back a foreign husband. No one bothers to remember her married name. She’s just called Milly Bonner. They run the plantation on shares, and I guess they are making money, for sugar is up. That’s what makes Honolulu so gay just now, it’s always lively when sugar is up.”

As they talked, Florence looked out upon a new world of vivid colours, sparkling and clear, the tall mountains purple against a deep blue sky. She unconsciously held tightly to a fold of Mrs. Ross’s *holaku*.

“It’s all so wonderful!” she said enthusiastically, “and oh, what a lovely, lovely place!”

“This is my home,” said Mrs. Ross complacently, as

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they turned into a gravelled road, shaded by royal palms. On all sides were strange looking plants, bushes with sword-like spikes, variegated leaves in crimson, yellow and green, and here and there, throwing their shadows on the flower beds, were great trees of giant bamboo, blossoming coffee, tamarind and mango. The rambling one-storied house stood far back in the garden on a slight eminence. A scarlet-creeper swept like a flame almost to the peak of the roof, enclosing the deep veranda that faced the street. The driveway led to the side entrance, shaded by drooping clusters of golden blossoms. In front of the house, sloping down to the hibiscus hedge, were flower beds, while a small banana plantation closed in the back premises.

Mrs. Ross dismissed the carriage, and ushering her guest into the sitting-room, went off in search of Bella, the Portuguese servant.

The doors and windows were open, in the hospitable island fashion, but the veranda with its curtain of Bouganvillia, shut off the light so that the room seemed cool and refreshingly dark after the sunshine outside. Florence looked curiously about. Against the wall was a glass cabinet containing sea-shells, Chinese earrings, ivory chess men, and a ship in a glass bottle. A piano stood in a corner, on old-fashioned carved legs, a native mat, with worsted work around the edge, draped over

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it. Between the windows was a singular object, something like an immense feather duster, with an exquisitely carved handle. It was six feet high, and broad in proportion, the feathery part composed of beautiful white plumes. Beside this was a large glass case, covering what appeared to be a neatly folded cape, made entirely of small yellow feathers sewn on a foundation, one overlapping the other.

Above the mantel, two enlarged crayon portraits decorated the wall, one of a mild-featured, bald gentleman with whiskers, the other evidently Mrs. Ross in her youth. Even the smudgy crayon and wavering lines could not disguise a certain comeliness in the youthful face. Between the portraits were innumerable loops of necklaces, some of small amber-coloured sea-shells, others of scarlet seeds, hard and bright as coral. The mantel was arranged stiffly, with an ornamental gilt clock flanked by photographs in frames, and a pearl shell, its exquisite surface defaced by a painting of Diamond Head. The furniture was well worn; the chairs smooth and shiny with age, and over all there hung the faint perfume of sandalwood.

Mrs. Ross came back, apologizing and hospitable, followed by a Portuguese woman carrying a tray. Bella was an undersized leather-coloured person, with black braids wound about a bullet head. She wore a stiffly-

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hanging *holaku* of large black and white squares like a checker-board, so short that it disclosed her bare feet.

She set out a small table on the veranda, brought the coffee and buttered toast, and drew up two chairs. Mrs. Ross and Florence breakfasted in the pleasant shade, looking out on the sunlit flower beds.

"If there's one thing I pride myself on," said Mrs. Ross, "it's my coffee. This is real Kona, grown on William's plantation."

"I make him," cried Bella, in a sudden loud voice. "Too muchee good."

"That'll do, go to the kitchen!" said Mrs. Ross crossly. "I've had that girl for years," she went on, "but she never seems to get any sense. She's physically incapable of learning manners."

"She's Portuguese, isn't she?" asked Florence, taking another slice of the crisp, hot toast.

"She came over with a batch of emigrants from Madeira, that were imported to work on the sugar plantations. Of course they all brought their families along. Bella's father died on the way out, so she wasn't wanted particularly and I took her. She breaks everything she lays her hands on, and if I don't keep a sharp eye on her she gives away kerosene and matches out of the cook-house to her Portuguese friends. But she's a

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good servant and I only have to slap her occasionally and she's all right."

"You have such a pretty garden," said Florence. "I don't think I ever saw a lovelier place."

"It *is* pretty," said Mrs. Ross. "My Japanese gardener is a treasure. He bothers me a good deal, training the plants into birds and umbrellas — they look perfectly horrid — but he makes things grow, and I sell a lot of my rare plants."

"Sell them? The place seems so full of gardens I shouldn't think anybody did more than throw seeds about."

"Ordinary things grow easily, but I am always experimenting. Mr. Ah Sue brought some Lychee plants from China years ago as presents to his friends, and mine was the only one that grew. Haka, the gardener, saves nearly every seed and I've made a good deal selling the little plants. You see, my dear, I'm not rich, and every little counts. I have a small income from my husband's life insurance, and my son sends me help now and then. When he was here last he built that little cottage at the other end of the garden. I'll show it to you bye-and-bye, you can't see it from here. I rent it to Count Tatsu, a young Japanese gentleman who belongs to the Commission. He speaks English perfectly. My niece, Emma, has enough money of her

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own to buy dresses and things, and then there are the two Princes.”

“Princes?” asked Florence, interested.

“They are the Queen’s nephews, Vida and Mana. Their mother was a cousin of mine, and when she died the Queen begged me to take charge of the two boys until they were old enough to go to boarding school. She knew they would have a home life here that was impossible at the palace. She wanted them to learn English too — for, though we are all Hawaiians, I have made it a rule to speak English for Lulu’s sake.”

Florence looked somewhat puzzled.

“Well, you see,” explained Mrs. Ross, “my husband came from your country and as I’m only a quarter-Hawaiian, Lulu might be called an American, so I wanted her to speak the language well. She is a bright child, and oh, she has been such a help in looking after the Princes! The King pays very handsomely, but they have been a trial to me, those boys! I’ve had entire care of them ever since they were so high. But now my daughter Lulu takes charge of them, and I leave their bringing up to her. She’s only thirteen, and so helpful and capable I don’t know what I’d do without her. Then I rented my corner room, for a long time, to a young man who was here from Germany, studying leprosy, but he left on the last steamer.

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He paid ten dollars a week for his room and board. It wasn't much, but I miss it all the same."

"May I look at it?" asked Florence. An idea was dawning in her mind.

It was a large corner room, with windows to the floor, opening out on a broad veranda shaded by awnings, and cut off from the rest of the porch by a green lattice-work screen, with a door let in the middle. The garden sloped downward on that side of the house, so the corner veranda, railed in like a balcony, was some six feet above the ground.

"It's beautiful!" cried Florence. "Oh, Mrs. Ross, will you take me for a boarder? For one month, anyway!"

The little half-white clapped her hands. "The very thing!" she exclaimed. "Why didn't I think of that before! It will be so quiet for you here, too, and you'll be away from that gossipy old hotel, and if you want to go anywhere I'll chaperon you!"

"It was a lucky day for me when I met you." They were sitting on the veranda steps at the side entrance by Florence's door, looking out over the garden.

"It was Mr. Todd really we both ought to thank," said Mrs. Ross. "For it was he who brought us together."

THE GIRL FROM HOME

“You see,” said Florence, “I could not bear to go back on this steamer, it would be too humiliating. I would have to carry my own explanations with me. But if I stay over a month I could write to my father and he’d tell everybody and then, when I get back, it will all have blown over.”

“Then suppose you write to him this very day from here? You needn’t go back to the hotel at all. I’ll telephone to have your things sent up.”

“But I’ll have to go down to pack my bag —”

There was the sound of crashing china from the cook-house accompanied by a shrill Portuguese scream. Mrs. Ross flew off to investigate, leaving Florence sitting alone on the steps. It was past noon and very hot. The leaves seemed to hang limply from the trees. Florence drew out her handkerchief to wipe her forehead and found the letter she had tucked into her belt. She had known, when the clerk handed it to her, that it was from Walter Sprague; she recognized the familiar handwriting. Strange that she could have so completely forgotten all about it in the excitement of her visit! She drew the folded leaves out reluctantly. Four pages of almost illegible handwriting the unfortunate young man filled with reproaches of himself. He was penitent to tears; indeed, there were tear-stains on the paper. He grovelled; he threw dust and ashes on his head. The

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ink had blotted through the thin paper making it difficult to read. The pitiful appeal only roused Florence to scorn and anger. It wound up by begging her to see him again before the steamer sailed for Maui, "where our happy home was to have been," ran the letter, "and where I shall return an unhappy, broken-hearted man. Let me see your beautiful face once more. May I not press again that hand I have lost by my hideous folly and crime? I may not live to reach Maui. If you hear that I have ended my miserable existence by jumping off the boat, you will understand that I do not reproach you. I am only ending a worthless life, that has no charms for me without my darling Florence. Let me see you once more. I am at Mr. Lansing's. Send me a line—" Here the letter was crossed and Florence crumpled it up with a gesture of exasperation. Just then the bell rang and Mrs. Ross's voice called.

"Come in to lunch. Come in to lunch."

Florence tore the paper to fragments and threw it guiltily behind a gardenia bush before she obeyed the cheerful summons.

Mrs. Ross introduced her to the rest of the family as she took her seat at the table. Emma was a silent young woman, dark, even for a half-white, with a low forehead and black eyebrows that gave her a fiercely sullen expression. She acknowledged Florence's greeting

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with a scowl, but her voice was unexpectedly high-pitched and mild. Lulu, Mrs. Ross's daughter, was very fair, with dust-coloured hair drawn tightly off a high white forehead. She had full, pale blue eyes and a keenly inquisitive manner. Florence shrank under a scrutiny that was busily taking in every detail of her dress.

The two Princes were boys about eight and nine; Vida, a sturdy little fellow, with rings of coal-black hair, and Mana slighter and more graceful, with a delicate face and large, lustrous eyes. Both showed, in the rich, warm brown colour of their skins, that they were full blood Hawaiians. Their manners were very elaborate and careful, evidently inspired by Lulu, upon whom the boys kept an anxious eye as each shook hands with Florence, saying politely, "glad to make your acquaintance."

"Oh, dear!" cried Mrs. Ross. "I forgot to ask if you have ever had the whooping-cough?"

"I had it when I was a child," said Florence.

"Oh, then, it's all right, the boys are just getting over it."

Mana pressed his handkerchief to his lips, growing purple in the face and looked wildly at Lulu.

She instantly rose to the occasion. "Leave the table at once!" she cried. "You know I always told you to go outside to whoop. Stay where you are, Vida," as the

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elder boy started to his brother's aid. "You must not keep getting up and down."

"Miss Van Voorhis is going to board with us," said Mrs. Ross to the table generally.

"I too much like!" cried Bella, who was bringing in a large dish of hot baked taro. No one seemed to notice her remark.

Lulu laid down her knife and fork to take another long look at the stranger, and then asked suddenly, "Why didn't you marry Mr. Sprague?"

CHAPTER FIVE

Good-bye to Walter

A SMALL table had been drawn out in the sitting-room; here Mrs. Ross laid envelopes, several sheets of pink ruled paper, a very fine pen, a bottle of ink that was almost colourless, and left Florence to write the letter to her father. It was a difficult task, and the young girl studied the great feather duster and stared long at the folded yellow cape under the glass case and the strings of sea-shells on the wall, before she drew a long breath and began to write.

It was a wildly incoherent letter, a jumble of indignation, self-pity, gratitude to Mrs. Ross and descriptions of the scenery. "It is impossible for me to go back now," she wrote, "and I know how comfortable you are at the club.

"Mr. Sprague doesn't live in Honolulu, you know, and once he has left town I will feel more comfortable. I have quite enough money to last me this month, and

GOOD-BYE TO WALTER

the thousand dollars you promised to send me next mail will help me to stay on a while. Even if it was a wedding present, I know you won't mind letting me have it for my expenses here. Dear Dad, you know how I hate the idea of coming home just now, and I'm with dear, good people who take the best of care of me, so you needn't worry at all. I have a descendant of the Kamehamehas for a chaperon and that ought to impress you. I wouldn't stay here a minute if *that man* lived here, but as soon as he leaves I'll try hard to forget the whole miserable, humiliating experience."

With a few words of affection Florence sealed her letter and wrote out the name and club address. Poor Dad; he was so young to be her father! She had come into the world before he was twenty-one, and here, at what he considered the ridiculously youthful age of forty-two, he found himself the sole guardian of a grown young woman. Though he was kind and indulgent, Florence felt that her presence was a continual restraint and embarrassment to him; and her projected marriage had been a great relief to them both.

Mrs. Ross had been on the lookout for passers-by, and called to Florence from the garden to bring her letter which was handed over the wheel of a phaeton crowded with girls, who were going down to the post-office with the family mail.

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Florence preferred to walk to the hotel. Honolulu held all the charm and mystery of a first foreign town to one who had never left her native land before. She started out in the cool of the afternoon and loitered on her way to look about. The wide street, shaded by flowering trees had been newly sprinkled to lay the dust. In place of fences many of the gardens were closed in by green hedges resplendent in scarlet hibiscus flowers. The houses were mostly low and broad with deep verandas and wide awnings. Through the open doors and windows Florence caught glimpses of domestic interiors; a woman in white swinging idly in a hammock, an old lady reading aloud to a couple of girls grouped on the floor at her feet; under a bread-fruit tree in the centre of a small garden, a number of children were busily playing with dolls and little dishes; in a larger, more pretentious place, a tennis game was in full swing; the girls in white, the men in flannels, shouting and laughing, while a gay party of young people looked on from the veranda, where, in their midst, a solemn looking old gentleman with a beard sat isolated under an odd square gauze structure that looked like a bird cage. Florence walked more slowly, studying the scene, and wondering if the man were a lunatic, when the flapping of hats and handkerchiefs gave her a clue to the mystery. He had evidently constructed a refuge from mosquitoes,

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and was reading his paper in peace, oblivious to the world about him.

As Florence wandered on she noticed that many carriages passed her, all going in the same direction — toward town. She knew the steamer was to leave on the morrow, and conjectured, rightly enough, that the month's accumulation of letters were being carried to the post. One old family carryall drew up and a white-haired lady, an utter stranger, called out to Florence, offering her a lift. "There is plenty of room!" she cried. "Jimmy can sit on the front seat." But the amiable offer was refused with an interchange of smiles and nods and Florence walked on.

A couple of bare-footed native girls loitered to say: "*Aloha*," in passing. Encouraged by the young white woman's friendliness, one of them took a wreath of fragrant green leaves from her own neck and threw it over Florence's shoulders.

"*Makai!*" she said. "*Makaino*," and the other girl spoke to her at more length in Hawaiian, but Florence could only shake her head and smile. They both laughed and turning at the corner of the street said "*aloha*" again, and were evidently pleased when she repeated the salutation after them — "*aloha!*"

There was something frank and simple in this little adventure that left Florence in a pleasant mood as she

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turned into the shady entrance of the hotel grounds. Here there were several small cottages under the trees, closing in the garden and driveway. On the porch of one a pleasant party were having afternoon tea; at another three young men in white duck were awaiting the arrival of a Chinaman who skimmed across the grass balancing a tray laden with tall glasses and bottles; a small boy on the lawn was practising with a stock-whip. Florence ran up the steps of the hotel, walked in at the wide open door and met Walter Sprague face to face. She started back with an exclamation of dismay.

“Oh, Florence! I beg your pardon — Miss Van Voorhis,” cried the young man. “I must speak to you. I have been here to see you six times to-day.” He looked around hastily. “Come into the drawing-room, there is nobody there. Only for a minute!” He was perfectly sober, and though pale and agitated was entirely master of himself. A Chinaman was sprinkling down the steps with a small watering pot; several young men stood talking at the hotel desk, and there was the sound of a guitar and singing voices from the front veranda. She saw there was no escape and followed him into the parlour, a large, hot room, furnished in magenta red. The wall, papered in gilt leaves, was adorned by a single large painting of a volcanic eruption on Kilauea.

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“Now,” she said, “I want to ask how you dare come and speak to me?”

This attack disconcerted the young man, who had evidently hoped to efface the bad impressions of the previous day.

“My dear Miss Van Voorhis,” he said, “I am ashamed of myself. Miserably, hopelessly ashamed. There is no excuse for me whatever, but I beg of you, I implore you to wipe it all off the slate. It can never happen again.”

She looked at him with minute scrutiny. His black moustache was curled up at the corners; his hair, parted exactly down the middle of his head, bore the crease left by the band of his hat on its smooth surface; he was smartly dressed, and made a rather good though foppish appearance.

“I can never wipe the memory of your reception of me off my mind,” she returned coldly.

“My dear girl — I give you my word —”

“Don’t! It is a waste of time for us to talk over anything. We only need to say good-bye and part.”

“But you can’t mean it!” he cried. “Think of our house all ready and furnished — my father and mother waiting to receive us at Huapala!”

“It would have been in better taste if they had been here to receive me in Honolulu, on the day of my arrival.”

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“My God!” cried the young man, “do you imagine I haven’t thought of that? But my mother couldn’t stand the trip — she hasn’t been to Honolulu for five years. I might have brought my father. He was dying for the chance to come. He’ll tell you all about it.”

“Indeed, he will not,” she replied firmly, “for I never intend to see him or any member of your family if I can help it.”

Mr. Sprague threw his hat on a gilt-legged chair and sat down disconsolately on the piano stool.

“It’s all up, then,” he said.

“Mr. Sprague,” she stood up very straight and cold before him, “I intended to write all this to you, and save both of us the pain of an interview. I cannot go into explanations or recriminations, I only want to say that I will never marry you, and when you leave Honolulu I hope I may never see you again.”

The young man twirled entirely about on the piano stool.

“You couldn’t forgive me?” he asked, with an upward pleading glance.

“It isn’t a matter of forgiveness, I am glad of the chance that separated us for we should never have been happy together.”

“How can you say that!” cried Walter passionately, “I would have died to make you happy. Our life would

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have been one long dream of bliss. You loved me, Florence —”

“I did not!” she cried, exasperated. “I — perhaps I thought I did — but it wasn’t you — it was the person I thought you were —”

“Well,” said the young man dolefully, “if I go now it will be forever. You don’t know what this means to me. I’m a broken-hearted man. I’ll never return to Honolulu, but in my lonely cabin on the mountain side —”

“I thought you had a very comfortable house,” said Florence cruelly; “at least, you described it so in your letters.”

“What will it be to me without you?” he went on, undismayed. “Only four walls. Home is where the heart is and God knows mine will not be there! You are sending me into exile. I won’t ask you again to forgive me now, but if, at some future time —”

“You must let me go!” said Florence. “There is nothing more to be said.”

Walter burst into ready tears, he begged and implored. She would have left the room, but he had fallen upon his knees and clutched her skirts. There was just enough real misery in the young man’s voice to keep Florence from disbelieving every word he said, but she could not find any sympathy for him in her heart. If

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he had gone away at once after that meeting on the veranda, she might have regretted her harshness if not her decision to break off the marriage. She might have felt that she had been too severe, and an overture later would have found her less resentful. But seeing him again so soon after, while she was still burning with mortification and anger; this scene in the hotel parlour, with the element of the ridiculous in it, and the agonizing consciousness that every door and window was open and some passer-by at this very moment might be an interested spectator; the anxiety lest some one should walk in and find this creature clinging to her knees, turned her heart to stone. Finally, as her only hope of putting a stop to the interview, she said: "I will shake hands, and we will part friends, if you will get up and say good-bye, in a proper manner."

"God bless you, Florence," said the young man, rising to his feet and preparing for an impressive farewell. "You have taken a load off my heart."

"Very well," said Florence, giving his hand a hard little shake and walking briskly to the door. "Good-bye!" and she fairly flew down the corridor and up the stairs to her veranda room.

CHAPTER SIX

The Bower

FLORENCE had been some days at Mrs. Ross's and was now busily engaged getting settled in her new quarters with the enthusiastic help of the Princes supervised by Lulu.

"I too much like!" said Bella. "Look, see! Pretty shawl!"

The Princes, with hammer and nails, were helping Florence to strengthen a long, narrow shelf.

"Ow!" cried Mana, "I banged my thumb!" and he set up a wail that ended in a cough.

"Run!" screamed Lulu, from under a billow of tulle, where she was picking out basting threads. "Go outside and whoop!"

"Please, Lulu," said Florence, "let the boys whoop wherever they like."

"See, Bella," cried the Portuguese girl, "look all same Queen," and she stood grinning in the doorway draping a long embroidered scarf over her head.

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She had broken three "lil cup aig" in the kitchen that morning; but Mrs. Ross felt herself lucky to have lost nothing more valuable than egg cups, for Bella had thrown herself at the work with fury in her frantic endeavours to finish in time to join the excitement of unpacking.

"That isn't a shawl, is it, Miss Van Voorhis?" asked Lulu.

"It's a piano cover," said Florence. "It was one of my wedding — I mean it was a present from a girl at home. She embroidered it for me herself."

"Let's hang it over the shelf," said Mana. "You know Mrs. Landry has a scarf over her mantel."

"That's a good idea, Mana," said Florence, removing it from Bella, who went back into the room where she resumed the absorbing work of unpacking things from the trunks and laying them out on the bed. It was a somewhat slow business, as it entailed a minute investigation of each object. Lulu sat at the open French window, where she could see all that was taken out of the trunks yet keep an eye on the veranda, where the Princes were busily helping Florence.

"It is like the *boudoir* of a Princess," she said.

"My Aunt, Princess Likelike," said Vida, "has a big, big room, with palms and flowers growing inside."

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“And Aunt Liliuokalani is a Princess,” said Mana. “She has two houses, but she hasn’t any *bower*.”

“I mean a fairy story Princess,” said Florence, abashed. “Don’t you know the tale of the Princess with the Golden Locks?”

“What’s locks?” asked Vida.

She explained.

“Princess Likelike has black hair,” said Mana, “and Princess Liliuokalani has grey.”

“Mrs. Landry’s hair is golden,” said Vida.

“Do you know,” said Mana, “I often think, if you dropped a gold ring in Mrs. Landry’s hair you couldn’t find it again.”

“Mrs. Landry’s hair is dyed,” announced Lulu. “I remember when it was quite brown. She went off to San Francisco with brown hair and when she came back it was yellow. She told Emma it curled naturally, but it has been straight as sticks ever since I can remember.”

“There, there,” said Florence hastily, “the shelf looks beautiful now. Bella, bring me some of those pictures in the little black frames.”

Mana showed very good taste in arranging the decorations.

“Haven’t you a big picture,” he asked, “to hang up in the middle over the shelf?”

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"Have you seen Mr. Maxwell yet?" interrupted Lulu.

"No," said Florence. She has brought out a large framed water-colour of the Golden Gate and was holding it over the mantelpiece.

"A little higher up," directed Mana.

"He's got eleven millions," said Lulu.

"Millions of what?" asked Florence. "That's right, isn't it? You put a nail here, Vida."

"Dollars!" cried Lulu. "Mrs. Landry is trying to catch him for a husband. That's why she went off to San Francisco to buy clothes."

"Oh, Lulu, you shouldn't say such things."

"Well," said Lulu, "it's true, for Mrs. Tyler told Harry the half-white, and he told Emma, and Emma told mamma and I heard her."

"You shouldn't listen to such things, you're too young."

"I'll be thirteen next October," she said, undisturbed. "I look young because I'm little. Vida, take those tacks out of your mouth. What if you should whoop and swallow them!"

There were screams from Bella. She had brought out a ruffled white silk petticoat, which she held up to her waist. "Oh, look, see!" she cried. "All same circus!"

Lulu hastily recovered the petticoat. She had finished

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pulling the basting threads out of the tulle dress, which she neatly and deftly shook out, folded and laid away, covered with tissue paper.

She hung up the silk petticoat in the oak wardrobe and soon reduced the room to something like order. There were several embroidered silk pillow covers which the Princes were pulling over cushions a shade too large.

“I wish I had something to put on my table,” said Florence.

“I have something nice,” said Mana, Lulu objecting, not that she had any reason, but from force of habit.

“That’s the piece of *tapa* the Queen gave you,” said the little girl reprovingly as Mana returned breathlessly.

“I know,” said Mana, “it just suits this table, I’m glad I had it.”

His brother had been looking thoughtful. “I can give her my carved cocoanut,” he said. “Oh, no — the calabash Princess Likelike gave me! That’s it!”

He brought a round smooth bowl cut out of wood and finely polished which he set down on the table. “There!” he said. “If people come, and leave their cards, you can put them in the calabash. Princess Liliuokalani has a big one on the marble table in her room, filled up so high with cards. I wish people would

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hurry up and call on you so that we could fill this one!"

"You are such sweet boys," said Florence. "See how much improved my table looks with the cover and the shiny bowl."

Lulu had been growing uncomfortable. Though she was so fair in colour she was an eighth Hawaiian, and even one drop of native blood tells for generosity.

"You can have my little chair," she said, dragging in a diminutive rocker. "I'm getting rather big for it now, but Vida and Mana can sit in it when they are visiting you and besides, it will sort of help furnish."

The Portuguese woman was not to be outdone. She proudly presented a small green crocheted mat, bordered with red.

"Bella make him," she said. "Put bottom side lamp. No get him *tapa* dirty."

Florence thanked her. Mana eyed the thing scornfully, but was too polite to make any objections.

"Let's call mamma in," said Lulu, "to see how pretty it all looks."

"Why, it isn't the same place!" cried Mrs. Ross, standing in the lattice doorway and looking about admiringly. "Herr Stuber had awful things in bottles ranged on that shelf and horrid pictures of lepers. He was such a nice young man, too."

"Miss Van Voorhis calls this her bower," said Mana.

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“She said *boudoir*,” corrected Lulu.

“Well, it’s all the same,” said Florence. “Let’s call it the bower.”

“I like bower too much,” said Bella.

It certainly was very bright and pretty, with the red and white matting on the floor of the veranda, the gay silk cushions piled on the long cane chair by the railing, the pictures, the photographs, the little hanging shelf full of books, hibiscus flowers in a red vase and a mass of roses in a squat green jar. The awning in front opened out upon the garden where a vista of paths, flower-beds and gardenia bushes were shut off by the drooping branches of a noble old tamarind tree. By the side of the balcony, quite close, a small banana plantation made a screen of broad, shining green leaves.

Lulu took off the Princes, who retired reluctantly to sew patchwork for their tyrant’s dolls. Bella returned to the cook-house the richer by several ribbons and coveted odds and ends, while the new tenant sank into a rocking-chair to rest. No sound penetrated to the bower; a deep, hot, peaceful silence surrounded her. The tree-tops in the garden, even the feathery branches of the bamboo were motionless in the sunshine. Florence drew in a deep breath of perfume and content.

Her first visitor was Lieutenant Todd. Bella announced his arrival with such an air of mystery and

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excitement that Florence thought it must be Mr. Sprague.

"Is he a young man?" she asked breathlessly.

"Yes, yes," said Bella, nodding violently.

"Black moustache?"

"No, no moustache. Got neck like a chicken," and Bella gave a very unflattering imitation of Lieutenant Todd's naval carriage.

"Oh, then," said Florence, recognizing her friend, "show him in here."

Lieutenant Todd gave up his only claim to distinction when he laid aside his uniform. In white flannels, with a red sash, he looked an elongated boy of sixteen. He carried a straw hat, and a small parcel done up in brown paper.

"What an artistically arranged apartment," he said, looking about the bower with admiration. He was very much embarrassed and glanced hesitatingly at Lulu's rocker. Florence directed him to a more substantial chair.

"Oh, Mr. Todd, I'm so glad you came. You are my first visitor here in my new abode. You know you were the first to welcome me to Honolulu."

"Don't mention it," said Hammy, reddening, "what an exquisite mat," he went on trying to change the subject, as he took Bella's humble offering in his hand and

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examined it carefully, with an air of exaggerated interest. "Did you make it yourself?"

"It is a present from Mrs. Ross's cook."

He put it down hastily.

"Our ship is giving a dance and I brought you an invitation —" He handed a letter to Florence.

She drew out an engraved card and read:

"The captain and officers of the U. S. S. *Mohawk* request the pleasure of your company at a reception on board, Thursday afternoon, April 12th, 1883, from two till six. Boats will be at the landing. Dancing."

"Can you go?" asked Mr. Todd.

"Thank you, very much," she said, "but I think I'd better not. I feel so self-conscious since I've found out how people talk in Honolulu. Mr. Todd, I want to ask you something, and yet I hate to mention the subject —"

"I — you — you can address any remark to me, Miss Van Voorhis."

"Well, did Mr. Sprague leave on the *Kinau*? I won't feel really comfortable here till I know he has left the island."

"Yes," said Hammy, "he took his departure yesterday. At least, I didn't see him go, but I met Lansing and he said they were leaving together at four o'clock. So it's all right."

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“Well, then,” said Florence, “that’s settled and finished, and we’ll never mention his name again. But all the same, even though I say nothing I will never, never forget what I owe you —”

“I have brought you a present,” interrupted Hammy, producing the paper parcel.

“Really!” she said. “I’m very lucky to-day. I’ve had several presents already.”

“It *is* lucky — I mean — it’s intended for luck.”

He unfastened the parcel and took out a small stone image, rudely carved into the semblance of a woman; squat, flat and hideously ugly.

She looked at it doubtfully. “Thank you very much,” she said.

“I obtained it in Peru,” said Hammy. “We were ashore there and had permission to excavate in the graves of the Incas for a pecuniary consideration. I dug up a mummy —”

Florence began to be interested.

“It was wrapped up in stuff that came to pieces in the air. And the — the lady, too, evaporated. All into dust, you know. But just at first she was perfect and she had this diminutive image clasped to her breast.”

“How curious!” said Florence, looking at the strange object in her hands.

“She must have been a lady of quality, for she had

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a beaten gold mask on her face and two tear vials. But my mummy was the only one that had an idol. I sent the mask and tear vials home to my sisters; I regret it now for I would have chosen to present them to you."

"Oh, I'd much prefer to have the idol," she said. "See how her eyes are carved and that band across her forehead. Oh, there are little holes in her ears. I do believe the mummy lady put jewels in her idol's ears."

"She must have esteemed it highly to be interred with it in her arms."

"I wonder if it brought her luck?" asked Florence.

"Miss Van Voorhis," said Hammy, drawing his chair a little closer, "that was my idea. I hoped she would bring you good fortune and that you might owe it to me."

"I tell you what," she said gaily, "I'm going to ask the little Princes to make me a temple and I'll place it on that shelf in the corner. She shall be my household goddess."

"Can a goddess herself possess a goddess?" said Hammy, flushing violently. "Could a deity —"

There was a timid knock at the door for which Florence was grateful. It was the two Princes followed by a very small Japanese gentleman in a silk hat and frock

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coat. Lulu sidled in, attracted by the advent of company.

"Can we come in?" asked Mana. "We've brought Count Tatsu to call on you. He was just coming home when we met him at the gate."

The little Japanese bowed and took a proffered seat with great self-possession. He spoke English with literal correctness.

"Their young Highnesses invited me to call upon you," he explained. "I would have hesitated at taking such a liberty, but for the fact that I am a neighbour of yours. I live across the garden in that small cottage."

"Mrs. Ross was telling me about you," said Florence. "And it is very good of you to be so neighbourly. See," she said, holding up the idol, "what Mr. Todd has brought me."

"Ah" said Count Tatsu, with interest. "A stone idol — South American, evidently of Aztec antiquity. Supposed to be three thousand years old."

"How extraordinary!" said Mr. Todd. "They informed me in Peru that these mummies were at least that age."

"You have idols in your own country, haven't you, Count Tatsu?" asked Vida.

"Ah, yes, in Japan there are many religions. You

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are Christian, no doubt?" he said, addressing his young hostess.

"Why, yes," she answered, smiling, "I hope so."

"What is your religion, Count Tatsu?" asked Lulu.

"I am a hypocrite."

He said it so seriously that Hammy stared in astonishment.

"Surely you are joking," said Florence.

"No," returned the Count, "a hypocrite is a person who professes a religion he does not believe. When we came to Honolulu, the commissioners were given their instructions from the Emperor, and one of the most important was to find the prevailing religion and join the most popular church of that denomination. We did so, and are, consequently, hypocrites."

"I am an idolator," Mana announced solemnly.

"Nonsense," cried Lulu sharply.

"I am," said Mana. "We often go to the Hawaiian Museum, and I love those old idols. Whenever I see one I bob my head."

"Nobody believes in idols any more," said Lulu. "The native people used to but they were ignorant and wicked and the missionaries made them stop it, and broke all their old, heathen images."

"I'm not afraid of missionaries," declared Vida. "We are going to bob our heads whenever we see an idol."

THE GIRL FROM HOME

"Then I'll slap you," said Lulu with determination.

Florence explained that she wanted a shrine for the little image and the Princes began excitedly discussing the whereabouts of some boxes.

It was boy's work, and they much preferred the hammer and saw to Lulu's work-basket.

"We'll make some little stairs in front," said Mana, "so you can set a candle out as they do in the Catholic churches. I know just what you want."

"You will turn those boys into heathens again, Miss Van Voorhis," said the Count.

"I want to be a heathen," said Mana with a defiant glance at Lulu, who only replied by shutting her eyes and assuming an expression of infinite contempt.

"You should have a name for the little goddess, Miss Van Voorhis," suggested Hammy.

"Ko Ung means 'good luck' in Japanese," said the Count.

"It is rather incongruous to call a South American lady by a Japanese name," said Florence, "but as she was given to an American girl in Hawaii that will only add to the romance. We will call her Ko Ung, Count Tatsu."

"May she bring you all the luck her name implies," said the little Japanese, bowing. "By the way," he went on, "are you going to the dance on the *Mohawk*?"

THE BOWER

“Oh, did you get an invitation?” cried Vida. The Princes were sitting side by side on a cretonne-covered box, a napkin spread across their knees, trying to eat cake in a genteel manner under the watchful eye of Lulu.

Florence showed her invitation.

“Put it in the calabash!” cried Vida, relinquishing his corner of the napkin to lay the card in the bottom of the bowl.

“Where did you put your card, Mr. Todd?” he asked.

“I — I — I didn’t leave any.”

“Well,” said Vida politely, “perhaps you wouldn’t mind leaving one now.” He begged another from the Count and laid the two in the calabash with the interest of a collector, returning to his seat with a side-long glance of triumph at Lulu. He had not dropped a crumb.

Bella opened the lattice door. “King soldier come,” she announced.

A native man on horseback, in the uniform of the Hawaiian army, rode up through the garden. He reined in his horse by the veranda where the party was sitting.

“Miss Van Voorhis live here?” he asked.

“Yes,” said Florence.

He leaned from his saddle to hand up a square envelope. Florence turned it over in her hand. It was very

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large, bordered with gold and had a gilt crown stamped on the flaps.

“*Aloha!*” said the soldier, and then volunteering amiably, “Invitation to the King’s ball; hope you can come;” he wheeled about his horse and trotted off saluting the company in the most friendly manner.

“Mama Ross got hers a week ago,” said Mana.

“It’s the ball in honour of the Russian officers,” Mr. Todd explained.

“But I haven’t been presented to the King yet.”

“He knows you are here,” said Hammy, “and he always likes to make it pleasant for new-comers.”

“Let’s see it!” begged Lulu, and Florence handed her the card:

THE CHAMBERLAIN OF THE HOUSEHOLD

IS COMMANDED BY

HIS MAJESTY

to invite MISS VAN VOORHIS to a Ball

at Iolani Palace on

Wednesday, May the 2d, at 9 o’clock.

Full dress.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Drive

FLORENCE was shown in by a Chinese servant to a cool little room all in white and amber, where she sat waiting, card-case in hand; she was making her first formal call on Mrs. Landry. A hoarse voice suddenly exclaimed solemnly:

“Damn fool!”

The visitor looked about somewhat startled.

Mrs. Landry came in laughing. “Don’t be alarmed,” she said, “it is only the parrot. Keep quiet, Loretta!”

“But you are going out,” said Florence, “don’t let me keep you.”

The widow was in mauve, with a charming toque of the same colour and was drawing on a pair of long, embroidered silk gloves.

“I’m awfully sorry,” she said, “why didn’t you telephone? I’m going out driving with Dick Leigh-Garrett. He won’t be here for some time, though. He always keeps people waiting, so do stay till he comes. Let’s go

THE GIRL FROM HOME

out on the veranda where we can watch for him and talk. Sit down there, and I'll take the hammock. This porch is hardly wide enough to turn around in."

"Then you haven't always lived here?" asked Florence.

"No, indeed," said the widow. "The old Landry house is up the Valley. You'll see it when you drive that way, a great, dreary, damp place, with two iron lions at the gate. I rented it after Joshua died and took this little den which is quite large enough for a lone-lorn woman."

"It's very pretty," said her visitor.

"I like it, the other reminds me too much of Joshua."

"Damn fool!" observed Loretta.

"Oh, that bird!" cried the widow. "That's the only thing it says. So you are going to stay here?" she went on. "I'm so glad. Have you had an invitation to the King's Ball yet? I saw Rex last night and he said he would send you one. I told him you were at Mrs. Ross's; how do you like it there?"

"Very much, indeed. I never knew any one so kind."

"I don't deny she has her virtues, but I get a little weary of the daughter of the Kamehamehas, and her everlasting niece."

"The girl looks very fierce," said Florence. "I was

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afraid of her at first, she glared at me so, but she is really a soft-hearted creature."

"She's a sheep in wolf's clothing."

"Poor Emma!"

"Poor Emma!" echoed Mrs. Landry scornfully. "She is just like all the half-whites, only not so pretty as some. They never say a word, whether from stupidity or shyness I don't know, and yet they always have a crowd of men adoring their footsteps. Poor Emma! Mrs. Ross complains about the snubbing her niece gets, but I've never seen any of it. As for our girls, they have all they can do to hold their own against the attractions of the half-whites."

"I would not mind that kind of snubbing very much," said Florence.

"The upper class natives and half-whites hold a very good position here; I suppose it is because the King and Court are Hawaiians. Their standing in society would soon disappear if the monarchy went out."

"I hope it never may."

"It would be good-bye to romance in Honolulu if ever that happened. Imagine this lovely island with no King, no Royal Court, no native army. Even the navy is a joy forever. Do you know the extent of the King's navee?"

"Do you mean men-of-war? How many has he?"

THE GIRL FROM HOME

“One ship!” said Mrs. Landry. “The *Kaimiloa*. Oh, no, without the King, Hawaii would be like the play of Hamlet with the immortal Dane left out.”

“It is certainly interesting here now,” said Florence. “Long live the King!”

There was a curious patter of tiny feet on the floor. She looked down and saw Loretta ambling along the veranda. The bird climbed up a post with the aid of its hooked beak and sat on the railing, her green feathers smoothed down, her head cocked on one side.

“Pretty Polly,” said Florence. “Polly want a cracker?”

“Damn fool!” was the quick and brilliant retort.

Mrs. Landry laughed. “You brought that on yourself. It is her only repartee. But I want to ask you before Dick comes, what have you done with Walter Sprague?”

“He has gone back to Maui,” said Florence.

“So you have cast him off. Poor Walter, I can imagine him leaving with a wreath about his neck and the tear of sentiment in his eye.”

“Please don’t talk about him,” said Florence. “I want to forget his very existence. You’ll make me wish I had gone back on the *Suez*.”

“You’ll never be sorry you missed that trip,” said Mrs. Landry. “Wait till the spirit of Honolulu gets

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into your blood, you'll be as frivolous as the rest of us, dancing and flirting and riding —”

“Well, I like riding at any rate, and I always rode a great deal on my father's ranch in California. Those horses the Bonner girls had were beauties.”

“Oh, dear,” said Mrs. Landry, “I hate horses. I know it is an awful thing to say, but I hate horses and violets and nice long walks and a Sunday at home.”

“But surely you like a fine horse for driving?”

“Not a bit,” said Mrs. Landry. “When a man takes you out for a drive why on earth should he have a beast that nearly pulls his arms off and keeps his attention fixed every moment? It isn't complimentary to the lady.”

“I don't believe you'd like it, either,” said Florence, “if he drove up with a donkey.”

“Yes, I should,” said Mrs. Landry. “If it were the fashion I'd just love to jog along in a donkey-cart. I am going out driving now and I do hope Captain Leigh-Garrett won't bring along one of his lively prancing steeds. They shy and they kick, and they stand upon their hind legs and paw the air — oh, I've been frightened out of my wits.”

“Then why go?”

“Because Dick is such a charming fellow! He's an Englishman and the handsomest man in Honolulu.”

THE GIRL FROM HOME

“Wasn't he the tall man on the wharf to meet you when we arrived?”

“Yes, that's Dick — you can't forget him if you've ever met him. But oh, my dear, I wish you could have seen him at the Coronation Ball in the full dress uniform of the Huzzars. All scarlet and silk and white and gold, the most gorgeous creature you ever beheld.”

“But what is an English Huzzar doing out here?”

“Nobody knows, that's what makes him so interesting. He must be a great swell at home, for the silver buttons on his hunting coat have three feathers on them. That means the Prince of Wales is Master of the Hounds, doesn't it? He says he owes so much money he came here to 'lay low' and let his income polish off his debts.”

“Has he left the army for good?”

“I don't think so. He talks of going back. It may be leave of absence, or perhaps he's suspended or something. The *Mohawks* call him 'the gilt-edged cad.' He's a great friend of the King's, though, and Rex made him an equerry. I believe the King likes to have handsome men on his staff. Dick is fair and Rex is dark, and they are nearly the same height; a stunning looking couple, and with Curtis Iaukea — he is chamberlain, you know — they make a splendid show in their uniforms.”

“Uniforms and brass buttons improve a man won-

THE DRIVE

derfully," said Florence, smiling. "Mr. Todd isn't the same person in his shore clothes."

"Oh, he wouldn't shine if he were covered with stars and garters, but there is one man here who looks like a Roman emperor even in a tennis suit, and that's Christopher Maxwell. But let me tell you that he's my property; who borrows Christopher Maxwell, borrows trouble."

"You need not be afraid, I'm not likely to meet him, as I don't intend to go out at all while I'm here."

"Don't be a silly," said Mrs. Landry. "But I won't worry about you — when you once get caught in the whirl you can't draw back — you'll meet Christopher Maxwell. He's the sort that men call good looking. He has thick grey hair and black eyebrows, and flashing eyes, and a sort of Marcus Aurelius look of power that makes common people cringe, and yet I heard a little old maid describe him as the kind of man that would make the dreariest tea or tamest whist party a scene of wild excitement by his very presence."

"Damn fool! damn fool!" screamed Loretta, curtsying on the railing with outspread wings.

"There's Dick Leigh-Garrett," said Mrs. Landry, rising.

"Then I'll say good-bye, and do come and see me. I must show you my little bower."

THE GIRL FROM HOME

The two walked down the path to the gate.

"Heavens!" cried the widow. "What on earth is he driving!"

A tall, fair man, in a smart trap, was holding in two horses that were harnessed in tandem. They were almost unmanageable and he called out with only a hasty side glance, "Get up quick. I can't help you in, but I'll hold them still."

"I wouldn't get in that thing for any consideration on earth!" cried Mrs. Landry.

"Don't be a fool, Sally," said the man. "Hurry up — I can't hold 'em in long."

"But those beasts are awful. I know it's the first time you've driven them tandem."

Florence was looking at the horses with undisguised admiration.

"You're not afraid, are you?" said the man to her.

"Not a bit."

"Then you climb in," he cried. "Sally can introduce us. I am Dick Leigh-Garrett and you're Miss Van Voorhis. Come along!"

"Oh, no," she said, drawing back.

"Go with Dick," said the widow, "I'll help you up. He'll be furious if you don't."

"But you —"

"Don't mind me. Hurry up."

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Captain Leigh-Garrett shifted the reins for a moment to give Florence a hand. The horses bounded forward and were half way down the street before she caught her breath. She felt that she had been rather hasty in saying she wasn't afraid, but she gripped the seat and held on pluckily as they swerved round sharp corners and narrowly escaped passing carts. Carriages and traps made way for them hastily, while children and dogs scattered to the sidewalks.

"You're a trump!" said Captain Leigh-Garrett between his teeth.

The young girl made no answer. She watched the man drive with increasing confidence and admiration, as they threaded their way through the narrow streets. It was not till they swung into the broad straight avenue of Beretania Street that the horses settled into a steady trot.

"They're all right now," said the Captain. "Tandem is much harder driving than four-in-hand; the horses don't balance. When you see the leader wobble from side to side, it means the driver is a duffer. See how steady this one is going and he's proud as Billy, too. A good leader always shows off a bit. He's a pure Arab. I've some good blood in my stables."

"Have you many horses here?" asked Florence in surprise.

THE GIRL FROM HOME

“I keep a livery stable.”

She laughed incredulously.

“It’s true,” he said. “I had to earn my living out here some way, and as I know all about horses I went into the gee-gee business. The only other accomplishment I have is boning a turkey, but I couldn’t turn that into a lucrative profession. I have two partners. They put in more money than I did, but then it’s equal all round, for I know more than they do. We have the best horses in town at the Royal Livery Stables. God!” he muttered an oath under his breath. “Here comes a hay-wagon. Hold on, now, for there’s going to be trouble.”

The leader balked and shied. “He’s only showing off,” said Dick. “But we’ll turn down this lane, all the same.” They swept round the corner on one wheel.

“Discretion is the greater part of valour,” said Florence breathlessly, “we’ll live to laugh another day.”

They returned along King Street, a wide road bordered by handsome residences, buried deep in trees and gardens. The horses were now well in hand, and Florence had an opportunity for the first time to look at the captain who was an extremely handsome man. His face was sunburned a healthy red that contrasted with his yellow moustache. He had strong, well-marked

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features, and bold blue eyes that scrutinized her under their dark lashes with evident admiration. She looked up and met his glance and her heart beat a little faster.

“Why did you come to Honolulu?” she asked hastily, making conversation, and then blushing at her apparent inquisitiveness.

“For my country’s good,” said Dick frankly. “You’ll find some queer fish out here, Miss Van Voorhis, and I’m one of them. Have you ever heard of a man’s ‘going to the wall?’ Well, Honolulu’s the wall.”

“I shouldn’t have thought of it in that light.”

“It’s an improvement on putting a bullet through your empty head. But I’ve no quarrel with Honolulu. I’ve been in worse places. There aren’t any snakes here, or jungle-fever, or gentlemen with assegais, and I’ve had experiences with all three. This place suits me and the King is a good fellow.”

“I haven’t seen him yet,” said Florence.

“We played poker last night at the boat-house and the King was A 1. He told the fellows to drop all ceremony and just call him ‘Rex,’ and what do you think they said, ‘All right, Your Majesty!’ Oh, Kalakaua and the Prince of Wales are the best bred men I’ve ever met.”

“Is he always so dignified?”

THE GIRL FROM HOME

“Well,” said Dick, “it isn’t exactly dignity, for he can twang a *eukalele* and sing:

“*Hoky poky winky wum*
How do you like your taters done,
Boiled or with their jackets on,
Says the King of the Sandwich Islands,”

and whoop it up with the rest of the crowd and still he keeps his distance all the same. He leads the fun and yet no one dares to cross the line. Even the cheekiest kind of a cad braces up and behaves when he’s with the King. We had a good joke on him once, though. Out at his beach-house at Waikiki we were sitting in the *lanai* looking at the moonlight. We had been at poker half the night and the King was drinking champagne in goblets. It was a pretty sight on the water with the moon shining and all that, and the King called out to the band boys to play something appropriate to the occasion. And what do you think they gave us?” The Captain laughed aloud, ‘The Old Man’s Drunk Again!’”

“Oh, I think that’s a horrid story,” said Florence.

“Well, cut it out,” said the Captain cheerfully, “and go back a topic. Why did *you* come to Honolulu? But I won’t ask, for Mrs. Landry told me all about it.”

She blushed up to her eyes. “Everybody knows every-

THE DRIVE

thing here, it seems. Mrs. Landry tells me 'there are no secrets in the tropics.' ”

“That’s the reason I’m so frank about my own affairs; I want to tell you the worst about myself, and tell it my own way. You’ll hear enough about me before you’re here very long, and I want you to stand by me and not believe half the stories they tell. I own I’m something of a black sheep, Miss Van Voorhis, but I’m not half so black as I’m painted. I really have quite a number of white spots. Will you let me come and gambol on your lawn? I think we might be pretty good pals if we got acquainted.”

Florence looked at Captain Leigh-Garrett doubtfully. In spite of his good looks and air of frank fellowship there was a suggestion of coarseness, almost of brutality, in the man, that she instinctively felt, though she did not formulate the thought in her mind. She was too unused to the ways of the world to know how to refuse his request, especially as she was sitting beside him driving behind his tandem.”

“You may come and see me, if you mean that,” she said, and then, a little embarrassed at the lack of warmth in the invitation, added:

“Don’t I hear music somewhere?”

“Good idea!” said Dick. “The band is playing at Emma Square. We’ll drive round and see the crowd.

THE GIRL FROM HOME

I don't know how the horses will stand it, but you're not afraid, are you?"

"Not since I've seen you drive."

"You're a brick," said the Captain.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Accident

IN the centre of Emma Square was a band-stand, where Mr. Berger and his Hawaiians played melodiously while all Honolulu gathered to listen. At the four corners of the park, turn-stiles admitted crowds on foot; native girls in gay *holakus* garlanded in wreaths; beautiful large-eyed half-whites, the colour of golden cream; young men in duck, with *cummerbunds* and hat-bands of coloured silk; Chinese merchants; Japanese nurse maids in *kimonos* leading small befrilled, besashed, bare-kneed children. The benches were filled, and more people walked back and forth or gathered in groups under the trees. Small boys frolicked on the paths occasionally rebuked by a bulky brown policeman in white, with a large shining star on his breast. The four streets surrounding Emma Square were crowded with carriages, some drawn in the shade by the side of the road, others slowly driving round and round.

As Captain Leigh-Garrett turned his leader into the

THE GIRL FROM HOME

procession Florence set her teeth and held on. The horses were frightened by the crashes of music, but Dick kept them steady.

The Bonner girls, on horseback, surrounded by a number of young men were the first people they ran into — almost literally. Florence gave them a nervous bow, but Polly Bonner cried out in her loud voice, “Why don’t you look where you’re going, Dickie?”

The leader was refusing to turn the corner properly and both horses backed.

“You’re running foul of the *Pawtuckets!*” screamed the other Bonner girl.

Florence glanced apprehensively over her shoulder to see a group of young men scattering. Dick laughed as they rounded the corner safely, where they were hemmed in by other vehicles and the horses could do nothing but dance sideways and prick up their ears.

“Those were the *Pawtuckets*,” said the Captain. “That’s Christopher Maxwell. Look quick! The one taking off his hat to some ladies. Sally, by jove! She’s lost no time getting here.”

The widow, radiant in her mauve gown, was talking to a distinguished looking man in white flannels, who stood hat in hand before her. Florence turned to look at him again, a striking figure, that stood out among the crowd with a certain strong individuality, and

THE ACCIDENT

though his clean shaven face, flushed with the high colour of health, showed no signs of age, his hair was of a crisp iron grey. As he talked he threw out both arms in a fine gesture of enthusiasm.

“He is inviting the crowd to a bun-struggle of some sort,” said Dick contemptuously. “You never see him but he’s doing the ‘Man from Cooks.’”

“He *does* look like a Roman emperor,” said Florence. “All the other men seem common beside him.”

The Captain scowled. “That’s the glitter of eleven millions,” he said. “Watch Sally setting her cap at him. She’ll spoil her chances in that quarter if she’s seen much with me, for Max has no use for Dickie. I tell you there isn’t a match-making mother or a designing widow in Honolulu who hasn’t sharpened her claws on Christopher Maxwell.”

“I thought Mrs. Landry —” Florence looked up at the Captain doubtfully.

“Oh, you mean me?” he said shamelessly . . .
“But I’m a detrimental. It’s the dollars she’s after.”

There was a crash of music, and then the Hawaiian voices took up the refrain in chorus:

*“Be still, my pu uwai!
E nae iki nei,
Hanu malie nahe nahe,
Sweet lei Lehua.”*

THE GIRL FROM HOME

The horses dashed suddenly forward, excited by the music. Dick pulled and steadied them with great difficulty as they turned out into Emma Street.

"We nearly knocked over that man with the red band around his hat," said Florence.

"Didn't you recognize him? That was Hammy Todd. I wish we had shaken him up a bit. It's rummy the way you can judge a whole man-of-war by one officer, like a box of cigars. Todd's ship is the mufiest one in the service. They have waffles and maple syrup for breakfast, and psalm singing on Sundays, and one of the men keeps a canary. The *Pawtucket* is a bully ship, good men, good wine, all round sport. The Russian man-of-war is a racketty, rowdy tub, wetter inside than out, and I defy any man to leave her sober. I know the whole lot, and if you'll come on Thursday I'll introduce you to the pick of 'em."

Several of the carriages, on turning into Emma Street, drove off, but Dick started his leader to make the circuit of the park again.

"The horses are getting awfully nervous," said Florence, "do you think they'll stand going all the way round another time?"

"They're all right," the leader was dancing skittishly — "but you haven't answered my question. You'll come Thursday, won't you?"

THE ACCIDENT

“But I’ve already refused.”

“Then change your mind — I want something jolly to look forward to.”

Just then a large painted ball, thrown by some child in the park, went flying past the leader’s head, falling on the ground in front of him. He shied suddenly, frightening the second horse.

“Damn these brutes!” muttered Dick, winding the reins about his wrists and pulling hard. “Don’t jump — hold on!”

There was wild commotion among the crowd. Pedestrians scattered, carriages and traps tried to turn out of the road. One man jumped in front of the leader waving his arms, adding to the creature’s terror. The young girl uttered no sound but held on to the seat with both hands, only giving one apprehensive glance downward, for the trap was a high one. The horses were plunging wildly. Even then Dick could have managed them, but a basket phaeton crowded with young children, and driven by a terrified governess, got in the way; the infants lifted up their voices and peeped like a nest full of frightened sparrows. As Dick made a desperate effort to avoid them, pulling violently on the reins, the horses reared backwards, crashing the trap into the trunk of a tree with such violence that the two occupants were thrown out with the force of a catapult.

THE GIRL FROM HOME

It all happened so suddenly that Florence had no chance to realize that she was falling; there seemed no interval in her mind between the moment of the shock, and the time she found herself in Christopher Maxwell's arms, clinging convulsively to his shoulders as he half dragged, half carried her through the crowd to a bench under a tree by the wayside.

"Are you hurt?" he asked, bending anxiously over her as she struggled to regain her composure, straightening her hat mechanically, smoothing her dress and then looking up into his face.

"No, no," she said breathlessly, "I'm all right. Go and see if the Captain's hurt!"

The crowd had closed in about the scene of the accident. People were holding the horses' heads, others were righting the overturned trap. Florence stood up shakily, steadying herself by the trunk of the tree to look on as the crowd parted before a group of men carrying a heavy inanimate object. It was Captain Leigh-Garrett, white and limp, his arms hanging down and dragging along the grass. They laid him on the ground, while an old man with a white beard, evidently a doctor, bent over him. The *Pawtuckets* formed a line about the prostrate figure keeping back the crowd that craned and surged behind them.

Suddenly she felt her arm clutched violently, and

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turned to see Mrs. Landry, pale and wild-eyed, holding to her desperately. Even at that moment Florence was surprised to see the widow, usually so calm and cynical, in such a state of agitation. She talked in a stifled, hoarse voice like an angry person.

“Dick is dead!” she cried. “Don’t tell me he will live — I know he will die — I can’t bear it!” She seemed unconscious of what she was doing or saying. “It is the end,” she went on. “He is dead. It is the end of the world for me.” She gave a choked gasp and staggered. Florence pulled her down on the bench where she lay back moaning and wringing her hands. Maxwell ran back to them.

“He’s coming to,” he said.

Mrs. Landry began to revive, drawing long breaths, holding Florence’s hand, and leaning weakly against her skirts.

The doctor had broken a capsule in a handkerchief which he held to Dick’s face. The effect was surprising. The young man sat up suddenly, looking about with the intent strained gaze of a near-sighted person at the faces bending over him.

“What’s the matter?” he said. “I’m all right.” He tried to rise, tottering to his feet by the aid of a dozen willing arms. “Don’t let anybody touch those horses. I’m going to drive them home myself.”

THE GIRL FROM HOME

He staggered over to the bench under the tree, making no attempt to brush off the dust that covered him from head to foot. He put on his hat all battered as it was, and said more firmly, "I'm all right. Just had my wind knocked out. It was that basket full of kids. Come along Miss Van Voorhis, I'll drive you home."

"Don't go," said Christopher Maxwell in a low tone, There was tenderness in his voice, and command, and something deeper and stronger that Florence had felt with her whole being from the first moment his arms closed about her.

The horses were being led up by officious bystanders.

"Come along," said the Captain. "It isn't like you to hang back. You are plucky enough for anything."

Maxwell laid his hand lightly on Florence's arm. She answered with a glance.

"Oh, Dick!" cried Mrs. Landry, "you've given us a terrible fright!"

The Captain looked at her with close scrutiny, taking in her pale face, her shaking hands, the embroidered silk gloves, torn to ribbons, and grinned comprehensively.

"I dare you to come with me, Sally."

To Florence's intense surprise Mrs. Landry stood up.

"I'll go, Dick," she said.

The battered trap was brought up. Captain Leigh-

THE ACCIDENT

Garrett took the driver's seat; Mrs. Landry, pale but composed, and with the concentrated courage that leads heroes to the cannon's mouth, climbed up beside him. The horses were freed, and as they started off with a spring and a jump, the crowd gave a cheer.

It was growing late. The band-boys, dispensing with the rest of the programme, stowed their instruments into bags and cases and departed. The crowds, after lingering in excited little groups to talk over the accident, melted gradually away. The carriages drove off; a few belated children lingered to frolic on the grass while Florence and Maxwell sat on the bench under the algeroba tree, talking like two friends who had just met after a long separation.

CHAPTER NINE

The Dance on the Mohawk

FLORENCE had been sincere in her intention of refusing all invitations, but she began to find it almost impossible to resist going to the dance on the *Mohawk*. She was young, her surroundings were new and interesting, and every path opening before her seemed a pleasant one. Since her school days life had been dull and grey. Her mother's illness and death, and the long term of mourning, had filled in the years between childhood and her arrival in Honolulu, and this was the first time that she had the chance of enjoying the gaiety of youth. Her life, devoted to the sick-room, had been shut off from the ordinary amusements that fall to the lot of an attractive young girl, so that the social life of Honolulu had all the excitement of novelty, and she found herself looking forward with eagerness to the dance she had at first resolutely refused to attend.

Dick Leigh-Garrett was laid up for several days after

THE DANCE ON THE MOHAWK

the accident, but he sent Florence a note begging her not to forget him, and assuring her that he would be well enough to attend the King on the *Mohawk*, where he looked forward to seeing her. With this letter he sent a basket tied with ribbons containing six red apples. Florence hardly knew what to make of this gift till Mrs. Ross assured her that apples were a great luxury in Honolulu, and these must have come in by a sailing vessel from California.

“I should think he would have sent flowers,” said Florence.

“They never do,” said Mrs. Ross. “We have too many. A friend of mine, who was a Mormon Missionary here, sent me a crate of potatoes when he went back to Utah, the largest you ever saw. That’s the kind of present Hawaiians appreciate.”

Lieutenant Todd came up to call and inquire after Florence’s health. He had been very much exercised about the accident, and implored her never to trust herself again with Captain Leigh-Garrett. Hammy also put in a plea for the *Mohawk* dance. Several of his fellow officers had seen the attractive stranger at Emma Square and sent word through Hammy that they would be honoured by her presence on board.

Mrs. Landry walked over one evening to ask if Florence was going. The widow was as cool and cynical as

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ever and laughed at herself for doing what she called "heroics" in driving home with Dick.

"I didn't want to go a bit," she said, "and I was frightened to death, but I cannot resist taking the centre of the stage."

"You certainly brought down the house," said Florence, laughing; she could see that Mrs. Landry was trying to make light of the exhibition of feeling she had made about Dick Leigh-Garrett.

"It was foolish of me all the same," said her visitor, "for I left Christopher Maxwell to fall into your net."

The girl was angry to feel herself blushing.

"Has he been to see you since?" asked Mrs. Landry, and Florence shrewdly suspected that one question to be the real object of the widow's visit.

"He came to call," she answered, "just to inquire how I was and ask if I were going to the dance on the *Mohawk*."

The widow jumped up. "That explains it!" she said, waving a silk finger at Florence. "Now I know why all your resolutions are thrown to the four winds of heaven. Of course you are going! But didn't I warn you he was my property?"

Florence had had no time to think or analyse her emotions, but from the moment she first met Christopher Maxwell her life in Hawaii had taken on a deeper,

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richer note. They seemed to understand each other so perfectly; as he had said, they "spoke the same language." She winced under the widow's banter, and could not trust herself to reply.

"I don't say I am engaged to him," Mrs. Landry went on, "but I could be if I wanted to. My dear, I tell you frankly, any woman can marry any man she wants, provided, of course, that she has youth and the ordinary attractions. But she has to be in earnest. It is a handicap to be distracted by somebody else. If I could only get Dick out of my head —" She stopped suddenly at the expression on Florence's face. "You look scornful," she said, "but you'll be wiser when you've had more experience. Nothing takes down your pride more than to find out just how much of a fool you can make of yourself, and you standing to one side watching yourself do it! I'm a fool, an arrant fool and the worst of my folly is standing here talking to you. I'll say no more about Christopher Maxwell, but I'm forewarned and forearmed and I defy you to do your worst!" She went off laughing, leaving Florence to wonder how much of her talk had been sheer frivolity, or whether there was a grain of real feeling in anything she said.

Florence was beginning to feel very much at home with the Ross family. They had accepted her as one of themselves, surrounding her with an atmosphere of

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friendliness and admiration that was very sweet to the lonely girl. Bella served her with fulsome flattery; the two little Princes frankly adored her — this beautiful champion who softened the rule of the tyrant Lulu. The black-browed Emma, fierce of eye and soft of heart, offered Florence, at various times, every trinket in her possession. Mrs. Ross looked upon the young stranger as her own discovery, and her manner towards the girl was a curious blend of motherliness and patronage. Lulu still held out against the fascination of the new boarder, devoting more interest to her movements and clothes than to her person. The little girl launched avalanches of questions about Florence's goings and comings, and spent long hours in round-eyed unblinking stares at her ornaments, from the gold beads about her neck to the paste buckles on her satin slippers. But in spite of the sharp voice and domineering ways there was something to admire in Lulu. She was very neat, could sew and embroider, braid straw for hats, make charming little baskets, curious shell and bead work, and was as industrious as a bee.

Florence's affection for the household was composed of the gratitude of a lonely, frightened girl who had found a home, and the keen appreciation of something too good to last. She would not dwell on the future or the thought that once on board the homeward-bound

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steamer, all this life would fade into a memory of the past. So she enjoyed the present to the full, and returned their kindness with a passionate friendship for every member of the family. She took extraordinary pains to learn Bella's patois, listening with sympathy to the girl's long rambling description of far-off Ma-deira, where oxen drew the sleds over the stony streets, understanding not so much the words, as the woman's homesickness for the land she would never see again.

As for the two Princes, their gentle manners, their lively talk, the uncomplaining courage with which they endured a harassing existence, and their instinctive appeal to her as to one who could shield them, touched Florence deeply. Their discreet little knock on the veranda door was never unwelcome, and her two friends were always greeted with a smile.

The family had spent a pleasantly excited morning preparing for the dance. Emma arranged natural flowers with an art and understanding peculiarly Hawaiian. She had a large black hat, which she trimmed anew every time she wore it with fresh flowers from the garden, and she worked busily wiring pomegranate blossoms, combining them with sprays of red leaves to decorate it for the afternoon. Florence remodelled a bonnet for Mrs. Ross, composed of a lace handkerchief, some chiffon and silvery ribbons to match her grey silk *holaku*.

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Lulu acted as general lady's maid running from room to room, fastening hooks and eyes, tying ribbons, arranging the fall of lace or sash deftly, and with innate good taste. She was in her element and flew about with an air of busy importance. The Princes improved the shining hours by turning somersaults on the lawn.

As Florence came out on the veranda, pulling on her gloves, Emma frowned at her under her fierce brows and then cried in her high mild voice: "Oh, isn't she lovely! All in white like a bride!"

"Oh!" cried Florence, flushing hotly, "am I, Mrs. Ross! I never thought of that. Almost all my dresses are white!"

"Don't worry, child," said Mrs. Ross, "all the girls wear white. But, perhaps, under the circumstances, you might put on a bit of colour."

"I'll get your yellow sash," cried Lulu officiously.

"You can wear my yellow feather *lei*," said Emma, which Florence accepted graciously. The object the half-white girl tied so carefully round Florence's neck was composed of tiny orange-coloured feathers.

"Only chiefs could wear those in the old days," said Mrs. Ross. "That feather cloak under the glass case in my parlour and this *lei* belonged to my ancestors, and descended directly from the Kamehamehas. Just you

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remember that, Emma, if those missionary girls turn up their noses at you. They have all the land and all the money, but they haven't the blood. They haven't any. I believe it's only chalk and water that runs in their veins, the poor white-eyed things, and I'll tell 'em so, too, if they snub my niece."

The tears rose to Emma's eyes as they always did when her aunt started the well-worn theme. She would never have seen any slights, had not Mrs. Ross pointed them out to her. If the missionary ladies (a term her aunt applied to the rich and fashionable set in Honolulu society) were kind to her niece, Mrs. Ross resented it as patronage, and if they passed Emma by with only a smile, she took bitter offence, and vented her injured feelings upon the defenceless daughter of the Kamehamehas.

"For Heaven's sake," she went on complacently, buttoning her gloves (she showed the mark "No. 5" to Florence, for she was vain of her tiny hands). "For Heaven's sake, have a little backbone, Emma. Don't you let those people ride over you. Show some spirit."

"But what can I do, Aunt Vally?" asked Emma. Mrs. Ross's name was Valeria. "I never know when they are rude, and even if I did, I couldn't slap them, or make faces at them, could I?"

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"Here's the express!" cried Vida and Mana, racing in from the garden.

"Harry will meet us at the wharf," said Emma with a self-conscious glance.

The two Princes ran to the carriage, holding their little brown hands out over the wheels, that the ladies' dresses might not be soiled. Danny Quinn, who was driving, tucked the linen lap-robe about Emma very carefully as she took her place beside him, giving the back seat to Mrs. Ross and Florence.

"It's a fine day we're having for the party," said Mr. Quinn genially as they started off, Bella and Lulu waving good-bye from the veranda.

"You must introduce me to Harry to-day," said Florence. She had often heard the name of Harry the half-white and Lulu had volunteered the information that he was "paying attention" to Emma, but Florence had only caught glimpses of his figure in dark corners of the veranda.

"I hope he'll wear his uniform and all his orders," said Emma. "He has a whole string of them. He wears the big ones for full dress, and then for an afternoon party like this, he has miniature ones all hung on a gold bar like a lot of pendants. It's awfully pretty."

"Are they foreign orders?" asked Florence.

"Yes, he got them when he went around the world

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with the King's embassy. They visited all the courts of Europe and Asia. He had a lovely time."

"The King of Siam was very kind to Harry," said Mrs. Ross. "He must have been a nice man. The Tzar of Russia, too, showed such an interest in Hawaii and asked a lot of questions."

"He liked the Queens best," said Emma, turning in the front seat. "He said the Queen of Italy was the nicest one of all. He had to talk French to the Queen of Servia, but almost all the rest of them spoke English."

"What is his position," asked Florence, much interested, "that he wears a uniform?"

"He's in the diplomatic service," said Emma, "but at home he's a clerk in the post-office."

They drove down the wide esplanade to the water front, and stopped on the end of the wharf where a number of well dressed people were waiting for the men-of-war boats. There were no bystanders or lookers-on; it was the hottest part of the day, and the going and coming of guests to the war ships had long ceased to interest the public. Mrs. Ross introduced Florence right and left, whispering explanatory asides. There was stout, motherly-looking Mrs. Tyler, with her black-eyed daughters and nieces (missionaries); Mrs. Cawson-Ealing, wife of the British Commissioner, with the tall, pale Misses Cawson-Ealing (English set); two

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noble-looking young women with large eyes and coal-black hair, evidently half-whites (the beautiful Coney girls); and numbers of young men. They all greeted the new arrivals very graciously, but Florence could see that Mrs. Ross kept a wary eye out for insults and was unusually haughty in her manner.

Other carriages kept driving up every minute. Harry, the half-white, came with Count Tatsu. Harry was a slim young man, wearing the gold stripe and embroidered fern-leaves of the Hawaiian diplomatic corps, but otherwise so like any number of young Americans of his age, that Florence did not detect the least sign of native blood until he spoke; his deep, soft voice was distinctly Hawaiian. Count Tatsu sweltered in a frock coat and silk hat and carried a small gold-headed cane. Almost all the other men were in white duck or very light tweed and straw hats.

Two loads had been taken off before it came to Florence's turn to step into the boat, which started off crowded, with long sweeps of the oars, the stars and stripes floating to the breeze, the sailors pulling in unison and all glowing with suppressed excitement. Florence sat facing the oarsmen and felt embarrassed under the gaze of so many eyes, sitting so close to men whom everybody ignored. Harry whispered to her that sailors take in every detail of ladies' dresses, looks and manners,

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to be gossiped about and discussed minutely during their long voyages.

The sunlight on the water was blinding. Honolulu, with its background of blue mountains, topped with clouds, seemed to waver and scintillate in the heat. To seaward, several ships were lying at anchor, flying flags of various nations. One was dressed out in bunting and evergreens, with awnings spread and the sound of music on board.

At the foot of the accommodation ladder an officer in uniform stood to receive the new-comers. Florence's gloves were no whiter than the rope that steadied her hand. As they came over the starboard gangway and down upon the deep deck of the old-fashioned man-of-war, they were greeted by a semicircle of officers, among whom Florence was glad to recognize Mr. Todd. To the right, evidently toeing a chalked line, was a solid mass of crisp, white sailors, rising tier above tier as they stood on coils of ropes and raised hatches, until some seemed to hang in the air tangled in the rigging. Several of them wore flowers tucked behind their ears or fastened to the band of their sailor caps.

CHAPTER TEN

Max to the Rescue

NUMBERS of guests had already arrived and officers of the Mohawk went about with hospitable intent, welcoming friends and introducing strangers.

The bulwarks of the man-of-war were high; the embrasures of the deep portholes were fitted in with benches, and draped in front by flags of all nations. Banks of flowers covered the hatchways, awnings shaded the quarter-decks, the boards were waxed for dancing and every bit of brasswork glittered with polish.

Hammy led Florence to the captain's cabin which had been turned over to the ladies for a dressing-room.

"This man-of-war," he said, "has engaged in battle more than once during the war of rebellion and has a commendable record, but all the same, if the truth must be told, I believe she has seen more dancing than fighting."

There was a crowd of women in the cabin, some ar-

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ranging their hair at the mirror, others studying the photographs of the captain's wife and children that ornamented the wall; a few stood at the port-holes, commenting on the guests who were arriving in the ship's boats.

"Hello!" said a voice beside her, and turning, Florence recognized the Bonner girls, in blue sailor suits and straw hats, their hair worn in long braids down their backs, and each carrying a fan tied to the belt by a man-o'-war ribbon.

"Ever been at a naval dance before?" asked Polly Bonner.

"No," Florence answered.

"Then let me give you a word of advice"—and Betty supplemented—"Refuse to look at guns or photographs of South American beauties!"

"But why?"

"They'll bore you stiff!" said Polly.

Mrs. Landry came sailing in on the arm of the Captain who bowed low at the door. She wore one of her new importations, an exquisitely fitting *ecru* lace with touches of green against her bright yellow hair. She attracted general attention; the girls at the port-holes drew their heads in to look at her and study her new gown; the crowd about the mirror made way as she stood, imperiously handsome, pressing her fingers down-

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wards on her belt, and giving that little shake of the figure that betrays tight lacing.

"Are you talking about guns?" she said to the company at large, "I hate guns, and I hate to have them explained to me. The only useful thing about them is that they're nice and shiny and you can use them for a mirror if your hat isn't on straight."

"Those are the best kind," said Polly Bonner. "I've no objection to them, but some of these nasty new quick-firing things the men are so proud of are all cut up into little trimmings."

"Look at that German ship," said Mrs. Landry, making way for some new-comers, but still the centre of attraction. "The port-holes are no bigger than a monocle, and the deck is ridged all over with pivots to turn the guns on, which spoils it absolutely for dancing."

"They say the new American ships are even worse," said one of the beautiful Coney girls who stood, with her sister, by the door.

"There's no doubt about it," said Mrs. Landry, "the navy is deteriorating."

Mrs. Ross and Emma came in and there were more introductions.

"I find it so hard to keep my hair in curl here," said a short plump girl to Florence. She was on a visit from Boston. Her round face was scarlet with the heat, and

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speckled over with mosquito bites. "My hair hangs in strings."

One of the Tyler nieces unpinned her sailor hat and disclosed a row of curl papers. "Why don't you try my plan?" she asked.

"Here come the Ah Sues's!" cried some one.

"The name sounds Chinese," said Florence.

"It is," said Mrs. Landry, "Papa Ah Sue is a Chinese Mandarin and his wife is a Hawaiian half-white."

"And his children are brought up like Americans!" said Polly Bonner. "Think of it — sixteen girls and one boy."

"And they're just as pretty as a string of sea-shells," said Mrs. Ross. "That is, the girls are. Billy Ah Sue is a nice boy, too."

"He's a Yale graduate," said Betty Bonner. "He's great fun. Sings college songs, and plays the banjo, and wears his hair cut short — he's just like an American tinted yellow."

"Only he speaks Chinese," said Mrs. Landry. "Whenever I hear him do it I always think he is making those ridiculous high-low sounds for a joke, and laugh at him."

"Here comes a boat-load from the *Stupendous*," cried a Sister Anne at the gun-hole.

"Do you see any midshipmen?" asked Polly Bonner.

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“They are my delight; I love the little dears with their dirks and buttons!”

“If you want to know what I think,” said Mrs. Landry, “I tell you we’d have better partners, and more real appreciation, if we were the guests of the sailors, instead of the officers. They all dance like angels.”

“Did you see that blue-jacket in the rigging with a rose in his cap?” said Betty Bonner. “I choose him!”

“Come outside,” said Mrs. Landry leading the way, “it is stifling in here.”

Mr. Todd, who looked remarkably well in his blue uniform and brass buttons, was waiting with a group of brother officers to meet the ladies as they came out on deck. He presented the Captain and some of his friends to Florence with much ceremony.

“Don’t give all your dances away,” whispered Mrs. Landry, good-naturedly, in passing.

“Why not?”

“Because, you silly, the men you like best always come last. Put down a lot of ‘John Does’ for ‘Woolly Horses!’”

Lieutenant Todd and his partner walked about the deck stopping every minute to speak to friends or join in introductions. An almost continuous stream of people were coming over the side; bebies of girls with smiling excited faces, matrons, looking very warm and bland;

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civilians standing aimlessly about trying to appear at ease, groups of officers from the other ships; haughty Germans, who clicked their heels and squared their shoulders in recognition of an introduction; lively Russians, talkative and noisy, with effusively polite manners; Englishmen from the *Stupendous*, very pink and cordial.

“There’s Christopher Maxwell; he has doubtless been lunching on the British ship.”

Florence had seen him before Hammy spoke; had noted his impressive reception by the semicircle of *Mohawks* and the quick glance he cast about the deck as though in search of some one. Her heart beat quickly, but she turned away and looked over the water.

“There goes a party from the Catholic Convent,” said Hammy. A whale-boat, rowed by native girls, was passing quite near. Several nuns in their white head-dresses sat in the stern. Florence looked after them with interest.

“They are approaching the *Pawtucket*. How strangely incongruous for women of peace to board a man-of-war!”

As they turned again to the deck Mrs. Landry, in her *ecru* dress, with the touch of green in her hair, was just disappearing into the wardroom, followed by Christopher Maxwell.

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Florence felt a strange sensation of disappointment, but quickly stifling it she turned to Hammy and asked:

“Where are the cannons, Lieutenant Todd?”

The sudden glow on Hammy's face, the light in his eyes, recalled to Florence, too late, the warning she had received from the women in the dressing-room.

“The guns have been shifted forward and stowed in the gangway,” he said, “and some have been used most advantageously as screens. But perhaps you would be interested to see our new, automatic, water-cooled, rapid-fire Gatling?”

She made the best of her blunder by saying, agreeably mendacious: “I'd be delighted.”

The young lieutenant excitedly led her to the poop, where a chubby brass gun was displayed in all its glory by the taffrail. He explained, elaborately and technically, with an expression of intense seriousness: “The magazine sits on here and it feeds down into this slot. Then you turn the crank. If you'll step in front you'll see the way the chambers revolve. The flange of the cartridge engages in this groove of the magazine slide. One man feeds it, while another fires it, thus only two do the work of many, for it fires up to 250 shots a minute. The water-chamber keeps it cool in spite of the rapid firing. You train the gun by raising and lowering the muzzle; you see, you make this sight correspond with

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that notch. If you were firing into a small boat at close range —”

Florence couldn't understand a word, but smiled sweetly, and studied her own reflection in the shining brass surface which distorted her face grotesquely, and thought rather poorly of the chubby gun as a mirror.

“See!” she said, looking out over the water, “here comes a splendid boat with the Hawaiian flag flying!”

“It is the King,” said Hammy, reluctantly leaving his gun. “Prepare yourself for a noise.”

Suddenly there was a loud report that shook the ship.

“Oh, what is it!” cried Florence. The banging continued.

“The royal salute,” said Hammy. “Twenty-one guns. His Majesty is coming on board.”

Everybody rose to their feet and formed a lane, Hammy pushing Florence to the front as they all craned forward. The band, almost drowned by the accompaniment of thundering guns, played *Hawaii Pono*. Kalakaua, in a well-fitting uniform of white cloth ornamented with gold, and carrying a brass helmet in the crook of his arm, came over the gangway where he was greeted by the Captain and officers of the *Mohawk*. He walked slowly up the deck, Captain Leigh-Garrett and a tall, dark Hawaiian in attendance.

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The ladies all curtsied deeply, and the men bowed low as the King passed on his way to the quarter-deck, where a throne had been arranged for him under a canopy, draped with American and Hawaiian flags.

"It is like a scene in a theatre," whispered Florence to Hammy.

"His Majesty has a box in the centre of the dress circle!"

The guns had ceased firing, the music changed into the "Likelike Waltz" and the dance began.

Florence, starting off with Hammy, was interrupted at the top of the companion-way by Mrs. Ross and Emma, who carried her off to be presented to the King. She followed somewhat reluctantly, for His Majesty occupied a conspicuous place, and besides she was conscious that among the gentlemen behind his chair was Captain Leigh-Garrett.

Mrs. Ross and Emma bowed low and kissed the King's hand. When Florence was presented, in some embarrassment, His Majesty put her at her ease by shaking hands democratically.

Kalakaua was an imposing personage; a tall, dark man, with closely curling black hair. He was blandly courteous, self-possessed, and in speech, appearance and manner, royal.

He looked at the young girl with evident interest. He

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had heard every detail of her story, and found the heroine even more attractive than she had been described.

“We hope your stay in Honolulu may be a pleasant one,” he said. “We should like you to carry away as agreeable an impression of our country as we shall always cherish of yours.”

“Thank you, Your Majesty.” She was too shy to say more, but quickly felt the genuine ring of kindness in the King’s voice, and instantly liked him. The words of respect came naturally to her lips as she bowed and stepped back, leaving him to open a conversation in Hawaiian with Mrs. Ross and Emma.

“Have you kept a dance for me?” said a voice behind her. She turned to face Captain Leigh-Garrett.

Florence gave him a “John Doe.”

“Is that all I’m to get?” he said discontentedly, as he scribbled her name on his empty card.

“I’ll see how you can dance,” she said, and then added: “You look very well!”

“Don’t I?” said Dick complacently, thrusting a thumb into his gold belt, and squaring his shoulders to show off the epaulettes.

“I wasn’t referring to your physical attractions,” said Florence, laughing. “I meant I was afraid you might have suffered some bad effects from the accident.”

“No, I’m all right now. I felt seedy for a day or two,

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but I think it was that smelly stuff the doctor gave me.”

“This is our dance,” interrupted Hammy meekly.

“But here, wait,” cried Dick. “Don’t desert me — I’m in attendance on the King, and I have to stay here for half an hour more, anyway. Don’t go!” But Florence went off with Hammy, leaving the Captain still protesting.

Following the waltz with Lieutenant Todd were several more round dances with the *Mohawks* and *Pawtuckets*. The deck was pretty crowded, and Florence thought of sitting out the next number, when Christopher Maxwell asked her for a waltz. It happened, fortunately, to be a “John Doe,” and she felt grateful to the widow for her timely hint.

As he held her for a moment waiting to catch the time, she looked up at him with a shy, quick glance of approval. He had met her with enthusiasm, and the glow of it was on his cheek. His grey eyes sparkled under their black brows; such strange eyes, matching in colour the thick, crisp hair, with lashes so black they looked pencilled. The shoulder Florence touched so lightly felt like iron under her hand; they glided about the deck to the exquisite music of the ship’s band with as much ease as though they two were the only couple on the floor; avoiding clumsy dancers, slipping away

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from energetic Germans and spinning Russians, keeping perfect time, threading their way between bumping couples, not pausing to rest or breathe till the last notes had died away.

Max found a secluded seat just outside the ward-room, where he and his partner sat on an ensign's box, while the negro steward served them with iced punch. Florence's face was flushed, little tendrils of hair clung in rings to her forehead, and her eyes were bright with the exercise and excitement.

"I tell you what," said Max, waving a Japanese fan vigorously, "it takes skill to dodge Russians. I thought we were lost when that automaton rushed down on us."

"He went round and round like a dancing Dervish," said Florence. "I should think he'd have a fit."

"Perhaps he was having one, and that's what ailed him."

"The King was awfully nice," said Florence. "I thought it would be so difficult to say 'Your Majesty;' but it came quite naturally. I couldn't have said anything else."

"He is dignified, and yet he has a sense of humour. After all, this is a toy kingdom, and if Kalakaua put on the airs of a Tzar he'd be ridiculous, but he takes you into his confidence, as it were, and you love him.

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By the way, he said a pretty thing about you — he said you looked like a spring rose and was very much interested in you, suggesting to me that we get up a surf-riding party to show you something of the old Hawaiian sport. You can swim, can't you?"

"Oh, yes."

"Then you'd love surf-riding; but even if you couldn't there's no danger with natives around, they're so much at home in the water. He'll give it at his Beach House, at Waikiki, some moonlight night. He was talking it over with Mrs. Ross when I came up."

"Isn't he good!" said Florence. "He sent me an invitation to the Palace Ball, too, before I met him."

"You must go to that. There is another English ship expected in, and then the *Adams* ought to come in any minute now, so you'll have plenty of partners."

"Oh, that's the ship Mrs. Worthing's husband is on. I came down in the steamer with her, and she was so anxious because it hadn't arrived."

"I know," said Max. "She has been very ill at the hotel, poor thing. But the ships are often delayed or put in somewhere else, or turn back for repairs, and not having any cable here we get no news. I'm sorry for Mrs. Worthing. The more I see of sailors' lives, the more I think navy men have no right to marry."

"I don't think men ought to marry, anyway," said

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Florence decidedly, and then laughed at herself. "I mean my views on matrimony are rather tangled. I want all women to marry and all men to remain bachelors!"

Max laughed and drew a little closer.

"Explain," he said.

"It isn't quite so silly as it sounds," she went on. "You know married women are much nicer than girls. You needn't smile, they are. More at their ease, more charming and entertaining. A girl is always at a disadvantage. If she is quiet and shy, she is thought a fool, and if she is pleasant and fascinating, men think she is 'setting her cap,' as Captain Leigh-Garrett says. But the married woman has an assured position and can afford to be natural."

"And doesn't that hold good with men?"

"No, indeed. A bachelor is far nicer than a married man, and the longer he remains a bachelor," with pointed flattery, "the nicer he becomes. But a married man is fettered by matrimony. He is conscious of being a detriment. Did you ever see a dog decorated with a paper collar? Well, some look very proud and pleased, and sit up in the most dignified manner, while others are shamefaced and mortified, and put on unconscious airs, hoping you won't notice it, but not one of them is the same jolly, lively, unaffected dog he was without his collar."

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“And matrimony is the paper collar, I suppose?” said Max.

“Sometimes it is a steel one.”

“Don’t you think that under very exceptional circumstances it might be a garland of roses?”

“I — I — oh, here comes my partner,” said Florence, jumping up, somewhat confused at the turn of the conversation, adding naïvely, “Heavens! I forgot all about him!”

It was Captain Leigh-Garrett who came up to claim Florence.

“I have been looking for you everywhere,” he said reproachfully, as he offered his arm. “Our dance is nearly over.”

The two men nodded coldly to each other, and as Florence glanced over her shoulder to smile farewell at Maxwell, she was surprised to see that he looked very serious, almost stern.

“I told you Max had no use for Dicky,” said Captain Leigh-Garrett as they joined the throng on deck. “I might have known where you were, but I warn you, look out for Sally!”

The dance was a glide polka, which is difficult on a crowded floor, and Dick fell out of step and out of time, though he swaggered with an air of consummate ease. They bumped into people, knocked elbows,

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and finally caromed against a steward carrying glasses, with disastrous results.

“You can drive, Captain Leigh-Garrett,” said Florence, “but you cannot dance. Let’s sit out the rest of this number and talk.”

“I’d much rather talk than dance, any day, especially with you.”

“Does that mean that I dance so badly, or talk so well?”

“I mean — oh, well, you know what I mean. Really, though, I didn’t sleep a wink last night thinking what I was going to say to you to-day, and you won’t give me a minute.”

“I’ll give you till the end of this dance,” she said, sweeping aside her white draperies and making room for the Captain beside her on the narrow bench against the bulwarks.

“Why not come to a port-hole — see how they’ve screened this one in with guns and flags, like a cosey corner!”

“We’re just as well off here.”

“But I want to talk to you,”

“Well, talk!” she said aggravatingly. “You can say a tremendous lot if you talk fast enough.” The Captain looked down, pulling the end of his moustache. Florence had almost put him out of countenance.

THE GIRL FROM HOME

"There's the deuce of a row going on over there," he said, nodding his head towards the other side of the ship.

"What is it?"

"Some ass of a fellow has had too much to drink. Dancing the *can-can* or something. Making a fool of himself."

She was but slightly interested. She remembered Max's face as she saw it last, and there was something disapproving in his glance, an anxiety behind the sternness that made her uneasy.

"Mrs. Ross is signalling to me," she said suddenly, jumping up. "Let's go over to her —"

"No, no," cried Dick, but Florence had walked off quickly, and there was nothing to do but follow.

The young girl threaded her way through the crowd, coming out on the other side of the hatchway; the people before her parted, and she beheld the figure of a slender young man dancing with nimble steps. A group of half-white girls were in paroxysms of laughter at his antics. Some of the officers looked slightly nervous; at that moment the dancer turned, and Florence gave a gasp of horror. It was Walter Sprague. Not the young man of the tearful eye and doleful countenance, whom she had seen last weeping on his knees, but a gay, *déonnaire* creature, skipping about to the lively music as though

MAX TO THE RESCUE

he had not a care in the world. He was using his hat as a tambourine, and smirked and bowed in imitation of a Spanish dancer, evidently in the highest spirits, and evidently also, from his flushed countenance and foolish smile, under the influence of punch.

Florence stumbled forward and almost fell into a draped port-hole that was fortunately empty, and cowered in the recess, half hidden by the flags and bunting. The blare of the music that had sounded so gaily in her ears but a few minutes before, now seemed horribly discordant. The patter of many feet on the waxed floor reminded her of one dancing figure. Voices rose and fell near her; there were sudden bursts of laughter, and she heard scraps of conversation as couples stood back to rest for a moment beside her retreat.

“How was she to get home?” she wondered wildly. She could not go out and order a boat. If she spoke to Mrs. Ross, there would be explanations and exclamations; poor Emma would be dragged away and all their enjoyment spoilt. If she spoke to Captain Leigh-Garrett — but no, she instinctively shrank from that. Hammy! How could she ever have slighted the dear fellow. She would be glad enough to see him this minute. And yet, what could he do? Taking her home would not change matters or stop that foolish creature, who was not only making himself ridiculous, but Florence as well.

THE GIRL FROM HOME

Suddenly the bunting parted. She looked up, startled and timid, to see Christopher Maxwell; he came in and knelt down beside her, taking her hand.

“My dear girl,” he said quickly in a low voice, “don’t cry whatever you do. I have ordered the cutter and I’m going to take Walter Sprague away from the ship myself. I promise you I will not leave his side till I’ve put him on board the steamer to-morrow morning for Maui. That man shall not trouble you again in Honolulu.”

“But what shall I do, Mr. Maxwell? I can’t stay here.”

“Yes, you can. Don’t make a mountain out of this. Everybody in Honolulu knows Walter Sprague, they are used to his foolishness, and if they see you quiet and composed, no one will think of saying a word. But you must not show by a look that you care. Who is your next partner?”

“Mr. Hooker, the navigating officer.”

“The very man! You needn’t dance, just ask him to show you the Gatling and he’ll take you up on the poop, and be so interested in his own talk you won’t have to say a word, but just let him explain guns. Then Mrs. Ross will take you home later and nobody will have noticed anything.”

There was the sound of a long, shrill whistle and the call, “Away, first cutter!”

MAX TO THE RESCUE .

“That’s my boat,” said Max. “They are dancing now, and I can get that man off so quietly no one will pay any attention to us. You will do what I say?”

“Everything,” said Florence.

“That’s right, you’re looking better already. I’ll send Mr. Hooker here to find you, and remember tomorrow morning Walter Sprague leaves the island. Trust me for that. Good-bye.”

When the navigating officer came he found Florence composed, though still very pale.

“I’m a little tired,” she said, “and would prefer not to dance, but if you would be so good I’d like to see the cannon.”

“Really!” said Mr. Hooker, with a look of pleased surprise. “We have a new model of a quick-firing, water-cooled, automatic Gatling that I’m sure will interest you immensely. Would you like to see it?”

“Very much,” said Florence.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

In the Garden

CHRISTOPHER MAXWELL was as good as his word; no one had noticed his departure from the ship, and Walter Sprague sailed the next morning for Maui, somewhat surprised at the unusual friendship of the great Mr. Maxwell, but flattered by his attention, and not a little proud to wave a hand to him from the departing steamer.

With that obstacle removed from her path, Florence allowed herself to be swept into the gaieties of Honolulu society with a light heart. The telephone was constantly ringing in Mrs. Ross's house, with messages and invitations for Miss Van Voorhis. There were rides with the Bonner girls; long, exhilarating gallops up the valley to the great precipice of the Pali, from whose dizzy height one could look over miles of sugar plantations to the blue sea beyond. There were impromptu dances at the Ah Sues's house, the Chinese merchant with the half-white wife, whose sixteen daughters, and one son, Billy, were

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Florence's devoted friends; there were little suppers at Mrs. Landry's, under the old *hau* tree that shaded the back porch, where lanterns were hung in the branches, and gay parties gathered round the widow's table, talking and laughing, till far into the night. It was here that she met many of the officers of the various ships in port — Russian, German, English, and American, each with some enthusiastic plan of entertainment on shore, or afloat. Dances on the ships, tennis on shore, garden parties, church bazaars, and picnics followed one another in rapid succession. The cordial good fellowship of her new friends, the admiration, the gaiety, even the flowers and sunshine of Honolulu, contributed to her pleasure.

Captain Leigh-Garrett joined the King and a party of officers from the various ships on a hunting trip after wild cattle, that took them off to Hilo for a couple of weeks after the *Mohawk* dance, but the time was so filled up with excitement for Florence, that she hardly noticed his absence.

Hammy was growing to be more and more her slave; nor was he the only one. The *Mohawk*, the *Pawtucket*, and the *Stupendous* contributed devoted swains, and her little bower hung with trophies; a sailor's carved ditty box; frames made in imitation of a life buoy, with the name of the ship in gold letters; shells, small model ca-

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noes, a spray of African silver sword, and a bunch of Australian flannel flowers. The little stone idol, in its gorgeous white-and-gold temple, gave Count Tatsu the excuse to send, as an offering, a plate of rare, scarlet lacquer, and a Japanese vase of cloisonné.

Mrs. Ross's afternoon teas in the garden, under the old tamarind tree, grew more and more popular; while Emma, whose gaieties heretofore had been of a sober, quiet kind, under the wing of a defiantly aggressive chaperon, found herself swept into the tide on the current of Florence's success.

Twice that afternoon sounds of wailing came from the cook-house, and the Portuguese girl waited at dinner with red eyes and audible sniffs, for Mrs. Ross, deprived of sleep and exhausted by late hours, was distinctly cross. Bella was to make chutney the next day, and had forgotten to pick the mangoes.

"Then you'll have to get them to-night," said Mrs. Ross. "It's just like you to put it off till the last minute. I *will* have chutney made to-morrow, and it ought to be on and boiling the first thing in the morning."

It was a beautiful, white night, the moon lighting up each shimmering leaf, as Bella, with a basket on her head, came through the banana plantation from the cook-house.

IN THE GARDEN

“Come out in the garden, Miss Florence,” cried Vida, “and help pick mangoes.”

She and Emma had refused at least five invitations for that evening, as they were both feeling tired.

“It won’t hurt you to stay at home for once,” said Mrs. Ross. She had put on gardening gloves and carried a pruning knife.

“You girls keep me going so,” she said fretfully, “that I haven’t had time to look at my garden. Fortunately it is as bright as day. The idea of Bella putting off picking her mangoes till this time of night!”

“Mana and I went up the valley early this morning,” said Vida, “and got some lovely, fresh, ginger roots.”

The mangoes were still green and hard, but Bella explained that they were just right for chutney. Vida climbed the tree, shaking its branches violently; Lulu and the Portuguese girl gathered up the fruit, while Emma and Florence, who had brought out a rug and some cushions, reclined restfully, as Mana frisked on the grass. Mrs. Ross, who had been wandering about the garden plucking dry leaves off here, breaking dead branches there, suddenly screamed aloud as though she had seen a snake —

“Oh,” she cried, “will you look at that! My lovely camelia!”

“What is the matter?” asked Florence, alarmed.

THE GIRL FROM HOME

“Do you see what that idiotic gardener has done to my camelia? He is training it into an arm-chair!”

Mrs. Ross sat down on a garden bench, her voice raised to a doleful wail. “I talk, and I talk, and nobody pays the least attention to anything I say. I’ve told that Jap a thousand times I didn’t want any umbrellas, or beasts, or birds, but I never thought of telling him I didn’t want an arm-chair. He’s never around, either, when I want to find him.”

“He’s gathering some tamarinds for Bella,” said Emma.

“Oh!” cried Florence. “Look! Isn’t that he out on the end of that branch? Aren’t you afraid he’ll fall off?”

“I wish he would!” declared Mrs. Ross, unmoved. “I wish he’d break his neck. It’s the best thing he could do. I don’t see how I go on the way I do without being positively ill with it all. Sometimes I have the most terrible palpitations, just from nervousness. When William was at home he used to say ‘mother, go to a doctor,’ but I said, ‘no, I’m not that kind.’ I can suffer, and suffer, and never say a word. I don’t complain. What I put up with would have killed twenty women. It’s a wonder I didn’t die with the trouble I’ve had with Vida and Mana.”

The two Princes, who were pushing each other about cheerfully on the grass, became stricken at the sound of

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their names, and looked apprehensively at Lulu. Florence and Emma were helping Bella peel and slice the green mangoes into a large, china bowl, as they all sat on the rug in the pleasant moonlight.

“Those boys will be the death of me yet,” went on Mrs. Ross. Florence had never seen the cheerful little lady in this mood before, but the Princes knew, from sad experience, what was coming.

“I’ll not forget about the bottles!” she said, evidently raking up a sore subject. “When my husband built this house, Florence, he laid down a lot of wine in the cellar — rows and rows of bottles on their sides, and they’ve been there ever since, and once when the cellar door was left open — ”

“We didn’t know there was anything in them,” said Vida pleadingly.

“Well, you ought to have known!” said Mrs. Ross. “They played soldiers with those bottles all the afternoon, and when William came home — he was here on a visit — I never saw him so angry. He wanted to whip the boys, and they well deserved it, but I said ‘no, we’ll shut them up in my room all day,’ and then what do you think they did?”

Mana was sitting very close to Florence. He touched her hand and whispered anxiously: “That was a long time ago, and we were very young then.”

THE GIRL FROM HOME

"You were old enough to know better," said Mrs. Ross. "They cut my best silk dress up with the scissors! Snipped little pieces out of it all the way down the front."

"Oh, wasn't that awful!" cried Lulu, making large eyes at the boys. "I remember, you didn't have anything to eat all day but *poi*."

"What is *poi*?" asked Florence briskly, to create a diversion.

"It's native food, like paste," said Mana sullenly. "When the sitting-room was papered last year the men stuck the paper on with *poi*, and then they ate what was left over for lunch."

"We have it for dinner when there isn't any company," said Vida. "You eat it with your fingers, with raw fish and squid."

Mrs. Ross looked uncomfortable. "I'm very fond of raw fish," she said, "and *poi*, too. The King always serves it at the *luaus* — that's a native feast. You must learn to like *poi* if you are to stay here. But *poi* isn't what it used to be when I was young," she was evidently in a doleful mood, and nothing pleased her. "The Chinamen make it now, and it isn't half so good as it used to be. The natives are getting so lazy they won't even pound their own *taro*."

"I'm not lazy," said Vida incautiously.

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"You are so lazy you don't want to go to school," said Mrs. Ross. "You've kept up that cough just as long as you could whoop, and you haven't done a thing for days."

"We made some patchwork for Lulu's doll's quilt yesterday," said Mana.

"Do you like to sew?" asked Florence surprised.

"Not very much," said Mana, "but Lulu makes us do it."

"And why not?" said Mrs. Ross. "The most beautiful embroidery I ever saw was done by an American sailor. But that's just the way, you don't like to do anything Lulu asks of you. I heard you to-day making a great fuss because you didn't want to play tea-party with her nice little dishes. I never saw such boys. Did you learn that piece she was teaching you?"

"Yes, we did," said Mana meekly.

"Oh, that's lovely!" said Florence, seeing a cheerful opening. "Won't you recite it for us?"

Lulu threw down her knife and assumed an air of great importance.

"They do it together, I taught them," she said.

"Get up, Vida."

The two boys walked out on the gravel path and stood facing each other. Bella looked on delightedly, dropping her work. Even Mrs. Ross was diverted from her woes.

THE GIRL FROM HOME

"Now begin," said Lulu. "You first, Mana."

That young person stiffly extended one arm, and shouted in a loud voice: "Haul *down* that flag!"

Mana raised a finger in the air and recited, "No, *no!* he cried."

"Both together now," screamed Lulu, and the two boys went on in unison:

"And *we* marched out with all the honors *of* the war!"

The two boys sat down, much pleased with themselves.

"Oh!" said Florence, somewhat disconcerted at the brevity of the performance, "that's lovely!"

"They do seem to have a real dramatic talent," said Mrs. Ross relenting. "But it's wonderful what Lulu can do with them. I don't know what I should do without her. Emma hasn't a bit of spirit."

"Bella help, Bella very good," cried the Portuguese girl, dashing in to save her beloved Miss Emma.

"You needn't talk," said Mrs. Ross, rising to the charge. "You are no good at all. When that gentleman called yesterday you screamed so loud he could hear every word, 'little fat man come, too big tummy,' you did, and it was the Captain of the *Pawtucket!*"

There was the sound of voices at the Japanese cottage; through the trees they could see the long windows open, the lights lit, and a group of fantastic figures ap-

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peared on the porch, shimmering in silks of rainbow hue.

“It’s Count Tatsu and his friends,” said Mrs. Ross. “They are so much prettier in their *kimonos*, you’d hardly know the count for the same man if you saw him in his Japanese clothes.”

“They look just like fluttering butterflies,” said Mana.

Bella’s dish was filled to the brim with sliced green mangoes; she carried them to the cook-house, aided gallantly by the Princes, who were waylaid on their return by Lulu, and taken off to bed. Emma had slipped away to meet Harry the half-white, who had come to call, and the two disappeared in the shadow of the dark veranda, leaving Florence and Mrs. Ross sitting under the tamarind tree. The quiet of the night, the beauty surrounding them, had soothed the little woman’s overwrought nerves.

“When I was a young girl,” she said, “we never went to bed when the moon shone. The natives love beauty in any form, and on such an evening as this all my Hawaiian blood comes to the surface.”

“I only know your American side,” said Florence. “If it were not for your voice, which is softer and sweeter than ours, you might be one of my own people.”

“And yet I’m very different. I believe in all sorts of

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strange things that would only make you laugh, though I've seen them with my own eyes. It's my Hawaiian superstition."

"The Scotch people are the same," said Florence diplomatically. "And the Irish. They talk about ghosts and banshees, and second sight, and the Yankee Puritans used to believe firmly in witchcraft."

"Did they?" said Mrs. Ross surprised. "I thought we were the only people who were so ignorant, and yet I can't help it. Whenever the red fish appear in the bay, I always feel a little fright, lest it may be my own end they are foretelling; you know they are only seen before the death of a Kamehameha. When Kamehameha the Fourth died, the natives announced, a week before, that the red fish were in the bay; and it was the same when his little son died. My own mother's brother was prayed to death, and I know if I saw two little sticks in front of my gate, I'd lie down and die of it."

Florence did not smile, for the woman was deeply in earnest.

"I only know one man who was saved from being prayed to death," she went on. "It was at the Bonner girls' plantation, and their *luna* Pilani announced that he was going to die on a certain night, for an enemy was doing incantations against him. He prepared for the end and gathered his family about him. The Bonner girls

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came down to see him, and argued and scolded, but it was no use, he had made up his mind. Fortunately the plantation house took fire. One by one the mourners, who had been wailing and despairing, sneaked off to carry water. Pilani found himself deserted; going to the door to look out, he saw what was happening and ran to help, and then he got so interested saving the building that the time for his death passed, and he's living yet. But if he hadn't been interrupted he'd have surely died, and no doctor could have saved him."

"Aren't there native doctors who understand such things?"

Mrs. Ross lowered her voice. "The *Kahunas*," she said, "are magicians, and their power is almost always used for evil. It is easier for them to kill than to save. I tell you, Florence, in a great calamity the natives do not call upon the *Kahunas* for help, but beg the protection of a true descendant of *Kamehameha*."

"What do you mean?" asked the young girl.

"I saved the town of Hilo from destruction. The lava was rolling down the mountain side towards the sea, a molten mass more than half a mile wide, and the little town of Hilo lay in its track. The natives were leaving in boats, the Portuguese people were fleeing in every direction, prayers were held in the churches, but the tide swept slowly down, relentlessly, creeping and crawling,

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putting out red tongues of fire and then coating all over black as it cooled. The natives were frantic, and it was then that they sent for a Kamehameha. I knew I could do it, Florence. Standing up before that flow, I gave the old Hawaiian incantation, and performed the heathen rite, sacrificing a live pig, and then spreading my mats on the ground in the track of the lava I lay down and slept. Florence, it stopped! It not only stopped short, but it rolled back on itself and hardened, a great mass six feet high, and you can see it there for yourself any day you go to Hilo. I did it, for I am a Kamehameha!"

Mrs. Ross, relieved from any fear of ridicule, and won over by the young girl's rapt attention, went on telling more strange tales; stories of the evil eye, of weird incantations followed by sudden death; of plants whose very perfume is deadly poison; of apparitions, re-incantations, and secret heathen rites. When she wearied and went off to bed, Florence retired to the bower, intending to follow her example, but her mind was filled with the strange, creepy horrors; the night in its brilliance seemed crowded with weird fancies. She did not light the lamp but, drawing a chair to the edge of the balcony and resting her elbows on the railing, she looked out at the garden, where every leaf and twig was lit by the moonbeams. From the shady recesses of the

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veranda came the musical trill of the *eukalele*; Emma and Harry were singing softly, their voices mingling in the tender song of "The Gardenia."

*"Auhea wale ana oe
Kuu pua Sadinia
I pulu ike kehau
Oke kakahi aka."*

With its odd little "half-white" chorus:

*"Oh, I never will forget you,
Tender vow that you gave me.
A eia no me a'u
Kahi konikoni ai."*

The melody had a lingering sweetness suitable to the moonlight, the beauty and the odour of the flowers. Emma and Harry were a quiet couple, who could sit side by side for hours without exchanging a word. Then one or the other would start a song, Harry playing the accompaniment on the *eukalele*, while they both joined in the refrain.

The young girl glanced about her little bower. All was in deep shadow, except where a faint taper glowed in a cup before the shrine of Ko Ung. It lit up the idol's face, casting strange, flickering shadows. It seemed as though the inscrutable countenance smiled. She won-

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dered, looking at it thoughtfully, what strange lands and strange scenes it had known in the far distant past. Had the Aztec lady decorated her idol with strings of turquoise and rings of obsidian? Were human sacrifices ever made for such a deity, or did they reserve that horror for the great ones? She wondered about the dead woman who had loved the little idol so much that she carried it to the grave with her. Had it brought her happiness?

It was growing late. The Japanese party was breaking up; there were sounds of laughter, of scraping chairs, and shouts of *Sayanara*. One by one, the lights that had glimmered in the cottage windows went out. The lovers too, had parted. Florence heard Emma's voice saying softly, "*Aloha*," and Harry's "*Aloha nui`oe*" from the gate, followed by the shutting of a door. It was too bright and beautiful a night to leave. Florence still lingered. The whole garden lay quiet and breathless in the warm moonbeams. All was silence. No, there was a faint rustling of the leaves, a footstep on the gravel path. Two great leaves parted, and a tall man in evening dress stepped forward into the bright rays of the moon — Captain Leigh-Garrett.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Dick

WHAT is it?" cried Florence, startled. "Is anything the matter?"

"Sh —" said the young man from the deep shadow of the awning. He stepped on a box in the garden bed, and leaning his arms on the veranda railing, smiled in the most easy and assured manner possible.

"What are you here for?" asked Florence, still somewhat alarmed.

"We just got back this afternoon," said Dick, "and this is the first chance I've had to see you." He dropped his hat over into the balcony as if by accident. Though he stood in the shade, the bright moonlight showed his face quite plainly, even the gleam of his blue eyes and the slight flush on his cheek. "What a sweet little bower!" he went on. "Why didn't you ever ask me in here? That old room with the feather duster was good enough for me. Here you're like a jewel in a casket. A pearl of great price!"

THE GIRL FROM HOME

Florence made a movement to rise. Dick laid a hand on her arm beseechingly. "Please don't go," he said. "Do sit down and talk to me. You owe me that much for running off and leaving me on the *Mohawk*. Do you realize that I haven't seen you for two weeks?"

"Is it so long as that?"

"It seems a deuced sight longer to me. You should have seen me hunt for you on the *Mohawk*. You know the captain of the foretop?"

"Yes," said Florence, lured into conversation by the harmlessness of the topic. "The sailor who walks up and down with a spy-glass."

"Well, I asked him about you, and he told me you were up looking at guns with the navigating officer, and after that you left the ship with two ladies. That relieved my mind, though, for I was afraid you were flirting in a corner with old Max."

Florence protested indignantly.

"Well, he's years older than I am," said Dick.

"Yes, in years," said Florence, "but how old are you in iniquity?"

"It isn't fair to chaff a fellow," said Dick. "I've told you all my faults and now you throw them in my face. I think that is ungenerous. It's much better to be friendly."

"Then why didn't you wait till to-morrow and make

DICK

a call like a rational human being instead of slipping through the garden like a robber?"

"There aren't any robbers on the island. Everybody leaves their doors and windows wide open. I could have walked through half a dozen houses on my way up here. We only have one robber in Honolulu, and he's locked up on the *Mohawk*. Did you see him, by the way?"

"No," said Florence, "what do you mean?"

Dick laughed. "You and old Max were sitting on a box right in front of his cell. If you'd looked over your shoulder you'd have seen him in a sort of chicken-coop with bars in front of it. But I suppose you were so interested in each other —"

"Are you joking?" asked Florence. "Was there really a man there? A prisoner?"

"I'll tell you all about it," said Dick, and laying his hands on the veranda railing he gave a light jump and seated himself beside Florence, swinging his long legs comfortably. "Shall I tell you the story? It's awfully interesting."

"Well," said Florence, taken aback, "you can tell the story and then go. Only be quick, for it's late. Everybody's in bed."

"It isn't late at all. You know on moonlight nights the natives don't go to bed, and a good idea too. It's only stupid white people who waste the loveliest hours

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of the tropics in sleep. Look at that moon. It's as large as a dinner plate. Well, to my story," as Florence made a restless movement.

"There was a man in America, somewhere, who embezzled a lot of money from a bank. Widows and orphans and that sort of thing. He skipped to Valparaiso with the booty. Then a Pinkerton detective went after him; you know there's no extradition treaty there no more than there is here. He's a queer duck."

"Who?"

"The detective. You must have seen him on the *Mohawk*. The officers snub him and won't associate with him or you might have had him for a partner in the mazy."

"I'd love to see a real detective. What was he like?"

"Little slim chap with brown eyes. Looks an awful muff. Not a bit like my idea of a shrewd squint-in-the-keyhole, spot-you-on-sight Johnny. They say he's a winner too. Sally tried to pump him about his daring exploits, for he's got a corking record; but he talked fashions and the new way to dress ladies' hair and she couldn't get a word out of him about shop."

"You're spinning this story out very long," said Florence suspiciously.

"No, really, you ought to hear it. Pinky traced his man to Valparaiso where he was stopping in a quiet

DICK

little boarding-house. He engaged the next room to Mr. Embezzler and proceeded to groan and moan and pretend to be frightfully ill. Embezzler was sorry for him."

"He seemed to have had good qualities for a thief."

"When the enterprising burglar isn't burgling, you know, he had a kind heart. He went in and sat by the poor sick man and held his fevered hand, and all that sort of thing. Pinky kept it up till the *Mohawk* came into port. The embezzler was pretty jumpy, and wanted to skip; but every time he made a move to go, Pinky got another spasm. He begged the embezzler for God's sake not to leave him alone to die in a strange land. They were both Americans and he appealed to the embezzler as a fellow countryman to get him on board the *Mohawk* where he had friends who would take care of him. The thief, like a silly ass, helped him; got a litter and carted Pinky to the ship, lending a hand himself to haul him on board; and the minute they both stood on the deck of the man-of-war, Pinky squared off and said: 'This is United States territory. We are under the jurisdiction of the American flag, and I arrest you in the name of — whatever they say instead of the Queen.'"

"What a horrible trick!"

"Wasn't it? They said the embezzler wept and wailed and said his feelings were hurt."

"I should think they would be, poor man."

THE GIRL FROM HOME

“But what about the feelings of the widows and orphans?”

“I suppose the detective was right, but it seems a cowardly thing to do.”

“That’s what the *Mohawks* thought. They could not refuse to bring the detective and his prisoner up here, for she’s homeward bound. But they hated the whole business. The wardroom was down on Pinky and refused to mess with him. Served him at a table by himself. The blue jackets twigged something was wrong, and they, too, sent him to Coventry, so he had a pretty mouldy time on the trip up.”

“And the poor man was right there behind us all the time!” said Florence.

“Oh, he’s all right,” said Dick. “The fellows see that he gets good grub, and poke cigars at him through the slats.”

Florence laughed. “That can’t be much consolation to a man in his position.”

“He isn’t tried yet. Perhaps he may get off.”

“Now the story is ended,” said Florence pointedly.

“Please don’t go in,” said Dick. “What are you in such a hurry for? You don’t see such a moon every day in your life. Night, I mean. A moon like that would get an Egyptian mummy into a breach of promise case.”

“Then you’d better fly, that’s what you ought to do.”

DICK

“I can conscientiously say that I have never in my life done what I ought to do. My life, Miss Van Voorhis, has been a steady go of leaving undone those things a fellow ought to do and t’other way about. Now you are the kind,” he went on seriously, “that knows beforehand what to do and does it. I mean you know what’s right. I’m an awful duffer to talk, but you know what I mean.”

“Don’t you do what is right?”

“The question does not interest me. If I want to do a thing I generally do it. What’s the good of worrying? I wanted to come here to-night and I came. I got hungry for the sight of you and I was drawn some way. Regular cart-horse draw —”

“I’m afraid you didn’t resist very hard.”

“No, honestly, I didn’t. Why should I? Nobody knows I’m here, nobody can see or hear us. Just for this minute we are alone together in the world, you and I.” He had slyly moved his hand along the railing till it touched her elbow as if by accident. She wore a soft pearly gown of nun’s-veiling with wide sleeves, and her white arms crossed before her were bare and cool. She was amused by his talk, though a little frightened.

“I love a woman with pluck,” he went on. “You climbed right into my heart when you came over the

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wheel of my cart that day. You aren't afraid of anything on earth, are you?"

"Indeed I am, I'm afraid of public opinion for one thing, and the gossip of Honolulu —"

"Is that a hint for me?" he said. "Do you think I ought to care for the gossip of this place? God knows they talk about me badly enough."

"You must have done something to deserve it."

"It has always been the same wherever I lived or whatever I did. There are dear old English ladies talking about me this moment and wagging their caps over my misdeeds. That is, if they don't mix me up with my brothers."

"I didn't know you had any brothers."

"Four of 'em, and all between me and the baronetcy. They're scattered in various parts of the world. If I went back now I know exactly how my aunts would receive me. 'So glad to see you! And how do you stand the cold climate out there?' Then I'd explain that it's Claud who has horses in Northwest Canada; 'Oh, yes, you're dear Richard from Honolulu,' and then in five minutes they'd ask how I got on with my sheep, and I'd remind them that it is Cecil who's in Australia. Family ties are not very strong with us but then, you see, we don't waste our feelings, and when we meet the right girl we have an accu-

DICK

mulation of affection to offer that is perfectly tremendous.”

“I think, on the contrary, that it’s the reason why you are so cynical.”

“Me, cynical?” cried Dick, surprised. “I wear my heart on my sleeve! I am the most emotional creature imaginable! Didn’t you feel it when we first met? I fell in love with you on sight in the real sentimental, old-fashioned way. If I wore my hair long, and a feather in my velvet cap you’d recognize the genuine article.”

“Now you’re jeering at yourself. That’s what I call cynical.”

“I’m not jeering. I’m in dead earnest. When we were off on this hunting trip I’d lie awake nights thinking of you, when the other fellows were so tired they’d sleep like logs. I even went out on the beach and wandered up and down in the dead of night to cool my fevered brow. I’d have written poetry if I’d known how, or lifted up my voice in song.”

“You must go now, Captain Leigh-Garrett, really,” said Florence.

“Oh, I’m not going to sing,” he answered quickly. “Let me stay here. If you only knew what it meant to me to be allowed to see you — to have you to myself if only for a stolen half hour. Don’t grudge me that.”

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“It isn’t right,” said Florence, “and I’d like you better if you did as I asked you.”

“Don’t put it like that! You’re taking a mean advantage. It *is* right, if good influence on a man’s life counts for anything. Don’t you think I’m better off here, breathing the air you breathe than gambling at the King’s boat-house?”

“Is that the only alternative?” said Florence. “I’d be ashamed to admit it.”

“But I never said I wasn’t a black sheep. I am, of the deepest dye — but since I’ve known you I care as I never cared before. It’s a rotten, empty, vulgar life that I lead and I’m ashamed of it. I’ve wasted my youth, I’ve given the best that’s in me to people I wouldn’t wipe my feet on. You are right. I do jeer — I scorn other people, but the man I despise most of all is myself. I was satisfied enough till I met you, and you looked at me in that cool, sweet, feminine way of yours. Then I saw myself as I really am. I came to you tonight like a drowning man to a straw — no, I don’t mean that, you’re not a straw, nor a reed, but a rock of strength. You’re my good angel.”

Florence rose to her feet.

“Don’t send me away!” cried Dick and then, as he read her face, “I’m going,” he said. “Won’t you say a word to me — no! don’t say it! Don’t hate me! I won’t

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come here again so late, I promise you. It was a mad thing to do and I'm sorry for I see it worries you. But let me —" He glanced about the bower for some excuse to linger, and noticed the light burning in front of Ko Ung. "Let me make an offering to the idol before I go."

"No, no," said Florence.

"You allow other people to make her presents, why do you withhold her favour from me, who really need a little luck? I have an incense burner of solid silver, a perfect beauty, I got in Burmah, and I'll bring it to Ko Ung."

"Then why stay now?"

"Because she mightn't understand what I mean to do, and I need the luck at once. I think it ought to be explained to her. I have an idea! I'll leave my ring as a pledge —" He swung over into the bower and went to the temple, walking softly; sinking on one knee and looking up at the idol: "Ko Ung," he said, "deign to smile upon your faithful servant and his humble fortunes. This ring," holding it up before her, "this ring bears the coat of arms of my regiment. The stone was picked up by an illustrious member of my family upon the field of battle. What little good there is in me, what tiny grain of principle or honour, is bound up with my regiment. So you may trust this as a symbol of all

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I hold sacred, oh, respected Graven Image, and I leave it as a pledge that I will bring you a silver incense burner;" he laid it on the velvet step. "In return I beg oh, most August Lady, that you keep an eye upon my bank account; direct me at the gaming table; give me tips on the races; guide my hand to fortune, and oh, most of all I beg thee, Inscrutable One, soften my lady's heart! May the girl I love smile upon me!"

Without another word, even of farewell, the young man snatched up his hat, vaulted over the railing, and disappeared into the night.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

In "Portugee Town"

IT was the day after Dick's visit, and Florence felt somewhat uncomfortable all the morning with a vague sense of wrongdoing. The adventure had seemed very gay and innocent under the light of the moon, but the memory of it weighed on her in a manner she could not define. Singularly enough, it was the thought of Christopher Maxwell that was uppermost in her mind. She felt instinctively that he would have disapproved of her conduct, and yet, she asked herself, why should she care for his good opinion? He was nothing to her. She was dissatisfied with herself and the world that morning. It was very hot weather, sultry and heavy, and the nerves of the whole household were affected. Being Saturday, the Princes and Lulu were home from school. Mana and Vida, discovering some boards in an unused summer-house had started off hilariously with hammer and nails to make a theatre, when they were interrupted by Lulu, who bore down

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upon them with fury, carrying them off to sew on her doll's clothes. There had been an agonizing scene. Florence was powerless to interfere, for Mrs. Ross, emerging hot and indignant from the kitchen where she had been scolding Bella for breaking a jar of chutney, issued peremptory orders for the Princes to obey Lulu. Then a half-white friend of Emma's came to call and the two girls had spent an hour on Florence's veranda; an hour so silent and heavy, so filled with long, placid pauses and Hawaiian repose of manner that their hostess in her present state of nerves had been driven to the verge of screaming. Snatching up her hat and murmuring a vague excuse she started out for a walk, oblivious of the hour and the heat.

Portuguese town blossoms like a rose on the barren slope of Punch-bowl. The dusty road led Florence through the thick of the village, where little green and red and pink houses perched on the steep hillside, each with its tiny garden and grape arbour. Swarthy women looked out from the open doorways or went back and forth preparing the noonday meal. Nurserymen worked in the midst of vivid patches of carnations, geraniums and lilies. The place swarmed with children; black-eyed, black-haired little girls and sturdy handsome boys, playing under the shadow of the vines.

Florence had passed the Mormon church, a plain

IN "PORTUGEE TOWN"

wooden building with a large eye painted over the entrance, when she heard the sound of wheels behind her and stepped to one side to let the carriage pass. To her surprise it stopped, and Hamilton Todd jumped into the road, an expression of intense satisfaction lighting up his countenance.

"This is an unexpected pleasure!" he exclaimed. "Will you allow me to carry you to your destination?"

"I'm not going anywhere," said Florence, "but you can come with me if you like. I warn you, though; it's awfully dusty."

Hammy sent the express off and walked on at her side.

"Now I know the meaning of Captain Leigh-Garrett's expression that whenever he cast his shad upon the waters it came back planked."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean," said Hammy, "that I am rewarded for a generous impulse. The poor old paymaster had a commission of importance to attend to in this neighbourhood, to bring remuneration to the ship's florist, and he was in a great state of perplexity, as he had a multitude of affairs in hand and the temperature at boiling point, so I undertook the performance of that duty myself, and behold how I am rewarded!"

"It was compliment enough, Mr. Todd," said Florence, smiling, "for you to jump out of your carriage into

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this heat and dust for my sake without saying anything about rewards." She glanced up at Hammy, tall, raw-boned, and red-faced, with genuine regard. In her present state of discontent his honest devotion was balm to her soul.

"Isn't Portuguee town pretty?" she said. "I have never walked in this direction before and had no idea it was so near at hand. It looks so thrifty, and busy too, and the people seem wonderfully happy. See that little salmon-coloured house on the hill!"

"It is, comparatively, hardly larger than a pill-box."

"And yet you know at once, from all those pots of flowers in the windows and the elaborate garden laid out in squares and diamonds, that the owner takes a great pride in his home. Who could be really unhappy in a salmon-pink house?"

"If we could rightly interpret the language of colours, we might be able to read the characters of the inhabitants."

"You mean there is jealousy in the green house? And a poor deserted swain in the yellow, and they love one another under the red roof?"

*' Yellow's forsaken,
Green is foresworn,
But blue is prettiest
Colour that's worn.'*

IN "PORTUGEE TOWN"

Florence went on as they stopped before a cottage painted in the brightest possible tint of azure.

"This is my destination," said Hammy, holding back the gate as they passed in under a green archway.

"What a dear little place!" said Florence. "Terraces and arbours and hothouses and rockeries, and it can't be much larger than a billiard table!"

"And exceedingly refined taste, too," said Hammy, looking approvingly at the gravel paths bordered with beer bottles hammered into the ground upside down. "These people represent the poorest class of immigrants, and yet I don't believe there is a land-owner in Honolulu, even Christopher Maxwell, with all his millions, who takes more satisfaction in his estate than Pedro Almeida. This is Pedro, Miss Van Voorhis."

A short, sturdy Portuguese came smiling out of the blue house and bade them welcome with an air of honest pride. He was quick to notice Florence's glances of admiration, and when he and Hammy had settled their business together, he offered to show them over the place. The garden lay on a steep slant of Punch-bowl, where Pedro had cut a number of terraces that were now blooming in carnations and geraniums. There was an infinitesimal rockery with ferns and wide-leaved water plants; a sunken barrel contained gold-fish; there was a tiny hothouse and many odd contrivances,

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all of which were minutely inspected and admired under the guidance of Pedro; but the pride of the estate was the grape-arbour. It was supported on bamboo poles, covered with a solid roof of green leaves, and the side towards the town trained into a series of arches. Inside the arbour was a table and several chairs, where the visitors were glad to accept seats in the refreshing shade.

It would have taken a stupider man than Pedro Almeida to have missed the fact that the lieutenant was in a seventh heaven of happiness. He took the young man to one side and made a suggestion that Hammy received with exclamations of delight.

“What an opportune suggestion!” he cried. “Miss Van Voorhis, Pedro says he can prepare a luncheon for us here and serve it in the arbour. He says his wife is a famous cook!”

“Broila chick,” said Pedro insinuatingly.

“I’d love it!” said Florence. “But what about Mrs. Ross? She will wonder what has become of me.”

“I’ll telephone,” said Hammy, and he rushed off to find a grocery near at hand, which Pedro pointed out from the gate. A slim brown girl with a scarlet kerchief tied over her head introduced herself by saying proudly, “Pedro my Poppa,” and showed Florence into the house, which was as small and as clean as a new toy,

IN "PORTUGEE TOWN"

fresh from the box. She helped the visitor off with her hat, poured out some water from a highly ornamented jug and brushed the dust off Florence's skirts with her own hands, even bringing a damp cloth to wipe her shoes.

The little room was hung with pink curtains, there was a tinted crucifix on the wall, some brackets supporting highly-coloured vases of paper flowers, somewhat superfluous ornaments in the house of a nurseryman. There was shell-work and bead-work and wax-work and when Florence admired the lace bed-spread, laid out over a bright green lining, the Portuguese girl touched herself on the breast and nodded, indicating that she had made it herself.

Pedro discreetly disappeared, leaving Florence and Hammy to wander about the garden by themselves while they waited for luncheon. The paths were so narrow they had to walk single file; the hothouse would only admit one head at a time for an admiring glance and they could have stepped across the rockery, but the evidences of care and loving toil in the blooming terraces guiltless of weeds; the clean gravel, the ornamental shells, and even the borders of beer bottles made the little place infinitely attractive. They returned to the arbour, cool and fragrant, in the shadow of the clustering leaves, and took their places at the white

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table, smiling at each other over the tops of the red carnations plucked in their honour.

Pedro himself served. The spring chickens were broiled to a turn; nothing could be crisper than the salad fresh from the garden; and the wine, opened with intense seriousness, had come all the way from Madeira to grace their little feast.

"I didn't look forward to such a pleasant adventure when I started out this morning," said Florence.

"Nor I," said Hammy. "After this I'll hasten to execute all the paymaster's commissions."

Heat and emotion were not becoming to Lieutenant Todd. His blue eyes looked almost white by contrast with his crimson face. His hair, which was soft and fine, clung to his damp forehead in little wisps, while his collar lay in a wilted string about his neck. Fortunately the young man was unaware of these drawbacks and beamed across the table, supremely happy.

"See," said Florence, glancing down upon the bird's-eye view of Honolulu with the sea stretching out a sheen of deepest blue to the far horizon. "What a lovely picture we have before us, framed in vine leaves. I imagine the bay of Naples must look something like this; I mean the same curve of the shore and color of the water."

IN "PORTUGEE TOWN"

"It is somewhat similar, only in Naples we were more impressed by the odours on the water-front than the beauty of the scene."

"It must be so interesting to be in the navy and see the world."

"On the contrary you don't have any opportunity to inspect it. That is the trouble. When we were stationed in Japan we only had an occasional day of liberty — never a protracted leave enabling us to investigate the interior."

"But you saw different countries?"

"There is a monotonous sameness about a sailor's life, Miss Van Voorhis. You are received formally and hospitably by the English and American residents, and you pay your official respects to government representatives. Of course, some countries are superior to others in attractiveness, and Honolulu is the favourite on the Pacific station. There was universal rejoicing when we had orders to proceed here."

"And what place did you like the least?"

"Paita, Peru! It is absolutely devoid of interest, and I'd infinitely prefer prison bars to returning there even for an infinitesimal atom of time."

"You are not likely to be ordered back, are you?"

"No, Heaven be praised. Our ship will be returning to America soon. Even now, the blue jackets are preparing

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the homeward bound pennant and discipline is beginning to relax somewhat."

Pedro appeared with an omelette in a bed of parsley, which he set on the table with an air of great importance.

"I always appreciate impressiveness," said Hammy. "That is the secret of the success they make in the fashionable restaurants when they exhibit a dish before they serve it."

"A sort of 'oh, see what you're going to get!' And then I suppose you all looked pleased."

"Even if it is only a mutton-chop one respects it more highly when it is elaborately served. But this omelette is like good wine, it 'needs no bush.'"

"I always judge a cook by his omelette. It is so simple and easy to make a good one, and yet hardly anybody can do it."

"Are you an adept in cookery?" asked Hammy, with a touch of awe in his voice.

"Indeed, I am. All California girls can cook and most of the men. I suppose it is because we go out camping so much and have chances to show off our accomplishments.

Hammy sighed deeply. "It only needed that," he said.

"What do you mean?"

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"Your knowing how to cook."

"What difference does that make?"

"I have often heard it remarked," said Hammy, "that a naval officer should not marry. But don't you think they require a home more than other people? They lead such lonely lives. A sailor is an unhappy man."

"They don't seem so to me," said Florence. "The naval men I've met looked very cheerful."

"It is a terrible life!" said Hammy gloomily. "All dancing on shore and quarrelling on board. You know, Miss Van Voorhis, I have considerable means beside my pay."

Florence looked at the young man somewhat embarrassed at the sudden change in his voice.

"Shall I pour out the coffee?" she said nervously. "It is sure to be good. Thank you. Pedro, your lunch has been a great success. Will you give my compliments to your wife?"

"That is the happiest product of nature," said Hammy. "A contented man. How seldom one encounters such a being. My own existence is a hollow mockery. You know, Miss Van Voorhis, I have always been devoted to ladies' society and yet I'm doomed to spend my life with men, and not always men that I am in sympathy with. The wardroom of a man-of-war is close quarters sometimes."

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“But you are not always on shipboard?”

“A far greater percentage of my time. On shore I invariably seek the society of ladies. But even then one’s friendships are but fleeting. Don’t think I mean idle flirtations — I would rather be the humble servitor of a good woman — I would infinitely prefer to be regarded as your — your Woolly Horse, in fact, as Mrs. Landry says — than be the — than have the — ” He floundered for a moment and then went on resolutely. “You aroused my deepest admiration the first moment I had the honour of meeting you. I have always appreciated, I may even say worshipped, feminine beauty, and in you, Miss Van Voorhis, I found my ideal. I would love you for your divine beauty if you were devoid of intelligence, and, on the other hand, your noble character would win my devotion and hold my affection forever if you were — were, in fact, plain.”

Florence hardly knew what to say. Hammy had given her no chance to evade the evidently impending avowal. She could not refuse to listen now without cruelly embarrassing him, or hurting his feelings.

“Dear Mr. Todd,” she said weakly, “I’m so sorry.”

“I love you,” said Hammy. He tried to lift the coffee cup, but his hand trembled so violently that he had to put it down again. “Would you, I mean I desire to ask you —”

IN "PORTUGEE TOWN"

Florence read the question in his eyes and answered it silently, sadly, by a shake of the head. She hoped to save him from saying more.

Two large tears rolled down Hammy's face. He wiped them away unaffectedly with his handkerchief. "I knew you would not accept me, Miss Van Voorhis," he said, "but I implore you, don't allow my imprudence to create any difference in our friendship. I value that dearer than my life."

"Nothing could ever change my friendship for you, Mr. Todd."

"I know," he went on, recovering himself with an effort, "that my duty is to retire at once and never obtrude my presence again. But our parting is imminent enough as it is. I will endure many a night on duty, pacing the quarter-deck and remembering every line of your face. I tell you, Miss Van Voorhis, the sensation is awe-inspiring to be alone in the universe on the wide expanse of ocean with only the firmament and your thoughts for company. And the memory of your personality will dwell with me for the remainder of my existence."

"I hope not," said Florence, "I mean, I hope —"

"Allow me to resume my usual standing with you," Hammy interrupted. "Efface from your mind what I have uttered to-day. I will never offend again. I shall

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live so many years of life remote from your presence that I implore you to let me have these last few weeks of your society unchanged."

"Dear Mr. Todd," she said, "I haven't so many friends that I can afford to lose one. You have been so good to me that it grieves me to the heart to cause you a moment's unhappiness. I have been lonely, too, in my life, and I understand a little of what you feel."

"But you have never been in love?"

"Never!" cried Florence. But the moment she said the words she knew. The knowledge came to her with a shock that almost stopped her heart from beating. She loved Max. At that moment she realized that she had always loved him from the first moment when fate had thrown her into his arms. He was her man; her other self, the love of her heart. She leaned across the table impulsively laying her white fingers on Hammy's clasped hands.

"Oh, my boy!" she said. "My poor boy, I'm awfully sorry for you!"

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Ring

FLORENCE parted from Hammy at the garden gate and ran into the house. Her first idea was to ring up Captain Leigh-Garrett and tell him — she hardly knew what, but in some way she hoped to keep him away; to get him off her mind and conscience. She found the number of the Royal Livery Stables, but in answer to her question a voice replied that Captain Leigh-Garrett was not there.

As she stood by the telephone for a moment, undecided, Bella came into the room with a pile of clean plates to put away on the shelves. She was followed by a Chinaman whom Florence recognized as her friend of the hotel.

“Why, Lee,” she said, “how are you? You haven’t forgotten me, have you?”

“No, Miss Flo’nce, I no forget you. You vella well? Velly nice you stop here, all same you home, Bella tell me.”

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The young girl smiled as she thought of the confidences between these two and wondered how they understood each other.

“Miss Flo’nce,” said Lee, “I like talk you. I look out you come hotel see Missy Bonna, I no get chance.”

“Well,” she said, somewhat surprised, “what is it, Lee?”

“I all same your father. I look young boy. Oh, no, me old man.”

“Really?” said Florence, wondering what he was driving at. His face was serious. Bella stood by, open-mouthed, hugging the pile of plates against her breast, steadying them with her chin.

“Miss Flo’nce, I tell you, Honolulu too much talk. You wella young gell. You velly pretty — Melican fashion,” he added, with discrimination. “I see you take lide along Captain Leigh-Gallett. I no like. Now, he come see you last night.”

Florence gave a startled glance at the Portuguese woman.

“Me no tell,” Bella cried anxiously, wagging her head over top of the plates. “Lee see you. We go dance last night Portugee town, come home late, see Captain Leigh-Gatta go out a gate.”

“He no good, Miss Flo’nce,” said Lee. “He velly bad man. I see him plenty time stop long hotel. He dlink, he talk, he too much dlink, he too much talk.”

THE RING

For a moment Florence looked indignantly at Lee, but the man's expression was deeply anxious. He was evidently trying to warn her in all good faith, and had no idea that his attitude was in any way impertinent. "I all same your father," he repeated deprecatingly.

"He, he — you don't mean to say that he has talked about me?"

"No," said Lee, "nobody talk. Me talk. I tell you true, Miss Flo'nce. By and by he talk. I savvy, too much. I tell you, look out. I see him last night, I too much flaid."

"He will not come again, Lee," said Florence with determination.

"All right!" cried Lee. "That finish. I no talk. By and by dead I no talk. Bella," he turned to the Portuguese girl so suddenly and sternly that the plates rattled in her arms, "you talk one word I kill you!"

Florence turned to go, with a horrible humiliating sensation of embarrassment in the presence of these people. Her heart swelled with indignation against the cause of it all.

"You come down hotel soon?" Lee asked. "Missy Worling velly sick. All lone. No got any flens."

"Is there anything I can do, Lee?" asked Florence reluctantly.

"I don't know. She velly sick." He put his hand to his

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chest and coughed feebly in imitation. "By and by I think she die. I wish that ship hully up. Her husband come I think she get well. You velly kind lady, you come see Missy Worling."

"I will," said Florence, escaping through the hall. She reached the front veranda just in time to see Mrs. Landry stepping airily out of a carriage. The widow came up the steps looking very smart and cool, and well dressed as usual.

"Here you are!" she cried. "I've come on an errand and it is a very pleasant one."

Florence showed her into the bower.

"Oh, the darling little idol! Has it brought you good luck? You don't look as though it had. What is the matter with you, you are as pale as a sheet?"

"I went for a walk," said Florence, "and I'm rather tired."

"Walk!" cried the widow, "in this heat! You must be fond of exercise! I have been at home all day with the blinds drawn and the veranda sprinkled. I rang you up some time ago and could get no answer, so I sent for an express and came myself. My message is from Christopher Maxwell."

To Florence's dismay and annoyance she found herself blushing under the widow's steady gaze.

"Ah, ha!" said Mrs. Landry, shaking a finger at her,

THE RING

“so he is turning your head, is he, after all I’ve said to you? My dear, I’m going to give you a little advice.”

Florence laughed somewhat hysterically. “Please don’t,” she said, “I’ve already had a great deal and I don’t think I can stand any more just at present.”

“I was not going to advise you against him, but against yourself. Don’t attach too much importance to what he says.”

“Your solicitude is flattering, Mrs. Landry,” said the young girl coldly, more angry than she would admit.

“You need not be sarcastic. Your cheeks are red as fire. However, he sent you a message. The King is giving a surf-party at his Waikiki place Monday night, and if you care to come Max says he will send his carriage for you at eight.”

It was the affair the King was getting up for Florence, and she noticed the lukewarm flavour the widow gave the invitation.

“It is moonlight now, you know,” continued Mrs. Landry, “and that’s why it was arranged in such a hurry. We must make the most of it.”

“I wonder Mr. Maxwell did not telephone to me himself,” said Florence, a little jealously.

“He did, but could get no answer. Then he rang me up. There’s some business he had to look after at one of his plantations. He leaves this afternoon and won’t

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be back till Monday. Go and telephone now that you accept, and I'll stay and make love to the idol."

"I hope it's not too late," said Christopher Maxwell's voice over the wire, "but we arranged it all last night in a hurry, for if we let this week go by we'll have to wait another month for moonlight. If you have any other engagement put it off."

"I haven't," said Florence.

"That's all right then."

"Will there be many people?"

"No, only our little crowd. I'm awfully sorry I couldn't come in and talk it over with you, but I have to ride over the *Pali* about some tiresome sugar business. See you Monday. Good-bye."

"Good-bye," said Florence. She stood for a moment holding the receiver that had carried his voice. Then, with a sudden impulse she touched it with her lips, her eyes filling with sudden tears. The sound had changed the whole world to her and a sudden gladness filled her heart. She glanced out through the open doorway to see Lee and Bella sitting side by side on the cook-house steps in deep and confidential conversation. Coming back to the bower, with a flush on her cheek and a tender light in her eyes she found the widow standing very straight and angry, holding a small object in her hand.

"I found this in front of the idol," she said.

THE RING

“What is it?” asked Florence pleasantly.

“It is Dick Leigh-Garrett’s ring,” Mrs. Landry answered in a harsh voice Florence hardly recognized. “With the seal of his regiment on it. I know the history of that ring and I know that it has never left his hand before. How came it here?”

Lee passed by beneath the balcony.

“Good-bye Miss Flo’nce,” he called out.

“Good-bye, Lee,” she answered, and as she watched his white-robed figure disappear among the trees she thought quickly. There was nothing for it but to lie, and Florence hated Dick Leigh-Garrett with a rising burst of anger that he should have forced her to such an extremity.

“That stone was found in India,” went on Mrs. Landry. “On a battle-field — by Dick’s uncle, Sir Lionel. He had lain all night wounded and when he was carried off the ground he picked up a stone to keep as a memento. It wasn’t till he took it years after to have the arms of his regiment engraved on it that they found it was a flawless blood-stone. Dick loves that ring as he loves his regiment. Why did he leave it in your room?”

“I did not know it was there,” said Florence steadily. “He called the other day and said something about an offering to Ko Ung.”

A curious glance of suspicion shot from the widow’s

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yellow eyes. A leaden colour began to show beneath the pearl powder, and a tiny network of lines gathered about her mouth.

“I dined with Dick last night,” she said. “He was at my house till late — it must have been eleven when he left — and he had this ring on then.”

Florence stood silent, the colour coming and going in her cheeks; biting her lips to control the sensitive nerves of her face; the resentment that filled her heart bracing her to meet the widow’s fierce attack with a bold front.

Bella had come into the bedroom and was paying alert attention to the conversation. She appeared at the door, dust brush in hand.

“Captain Leigh-Gat come here to-day,” she said, “when you go out, Miss Florence — he say he make lil present Ko Ung.”

Mrs. Landry wheeled about and stared at the Portuguese girl for a full minute. Bella gazed innocently back, with round eyes open wide. The widow laid the ring down and drew a deep breath.

“What an idiot I am!” she said, sinking back into the rocking-chair while Bella vanished within the bedroom. “Forgive me, my dear girl, but I’m a perfect fool about that man. I know he’s a bad lot. I’ve caught him out in fifty lies.” She rolled her handkerchief into a little ball and carefully dabbed her eyes. “Oh, I know

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him through and through! But I can't help being a fool — a silly, idiotic fool about him!”

Florence drew out a wicker chair and sat down, composedly, though her hands trembled as she clasped them tightly in her lap.

“All the same,” said Mrs. Landry, “I don't see yet why Dick left that ring here. He's up to mischief and I advise you —”

“You need advice yourself, Mrs. Landry,” said Florence hastily.

“Do you think I don't know it? Do you think I'm proud of myself? In this life you go along like a blind puppy and knock your head against a post; if you are good-hearted, you stand by and warn the others coming after you to be careful. Do you think they heed you? You may scream yourself hoarse! No, everybody has to get a good crack on their own skulls before they will listen to reason. I know perfectly well what is good for me.”

“Then, why don't you take your courage in both hands and do it?”

“I cannot, I cannot. It means giving up Dick and that is beyond me.”

“I don't understand you very well, Mrs. Landry,” said Florence. “You spoke of some one else just now —”

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“You mean Max! That is a very different story. My dear, that man has eleven millions. I am an extravagant woman and I’m living on my capital. It’s not going to last very long and then where’ll I be?”

“Do you mean plainly and vulgarly that you want to marry Mr. Maxwell for his money?”

“But I like him, my dear, I like him! It is only such a frivolous woman as I am who can really appreciate a serious and earnest man. This town is full of dancing, flirting ‘Woolly Horses,’ and he’s the only *man* in the place.”

“Rich or poor?” asked Florence.

“No, rich. I wouldn’t admire him if he were poor. But you don’t understand me. I admire his riches because they show his ability. I am a true American in my appreciation of a self-made man. That’s the only kind of a man that’s worth anything. Christopher Maxwell came back from college when his father died and found his affairs in a hopeless tangle. He was little more than a boy when he took hold, and see where he is to-day. The banks, the shipping, the street-cars, the parks, the plantations, he’s at the head of every great enterprise here. I love his wealth — it’s like the wreath of laurel on the brow of a hero.” She laughed suddenly; “and I want some of the leaves! Don’t take me seriously, my dear. Men say how difficult it is to understand women. Do

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you know why it is so hard? Because they don't understand themselves! We're like the dog that ate his tag — we don't know where we're going!"

"You've made me very unhappy and very uncomfortable," said Florence. "And I cannot believe that you were in earnest in half you've said to-day."

"I wasn't," said the widow, rising and pulling up her silk gloves. "At least I don't know myself how I feel about Christopher Maxwell; but with the other man I'm really serious. It isn't jealousy on my part, honestly, I'm talking for your own good. Give him back his ring and keep clear of Dick Leigh-Garrett. It takes a woman of experience to manage him. He is not for the young person." She turned at the door and sang, saucily:

*"He's not a marrying man, my dear;
He lives on a different plan, my dear,
Keep out of his way if you can, my dear,
He isn't a marrying man!"*

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Magic Carpet

THE telephone bell waked the family early on Sunday morning, announcing the arrival of the *Suez*; Emma and Lulu walked down after breakfast to get the letters; the half-white girl with an eye for fashions brought by the passengers, and Lulu to glean any trifle in the way of gossip that might be floating about.

Florence was ashamed to thank Bella in words for coming so gallantly to the rescue, but a silk shawl of vivid aniline tint, and a pat on the shoulder needed no interpretation. Bella was speechless with joy, and accepted the gift, to Florence's embarrassment, with the air of one receiving well-merited reward. With the true instinct of a Portuguese *duenna* she dearly loved an intrigue, and now considered herself to be in the thick of a most exciting affair. On ordinary occasions she enveloped the most casual message, the most innocent letter with an atmosphere of mystery. She would report

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the call of a sewing-machine agent with nods and becks and confidential winks, and Hammy could not pay a visit to the bower without Bella slipping in ahead to announce his arrival in a melodramatic whisper.

She had told the truth in saying that Captain Leigh-Garrett had called while Florence was away, though the remark about the ring was pure inspiration. It was long before Florence could understand, from Bella's hints and innuendos, that Dick had left the silver incense burner, wrapped in a tissue-paper parcel, to be delivered into Florence's own hands. Her first idea was to refuse it peremptorily, but the Portuguese girl aggravated her into saying, in her most matter-of-fact voice:

"Oh, it's nothing but an old box for Ko Ung. Put it in front of the idol, Bella."

"Everybody see him!"

"Well, let them. Go back to your work, like a good girl, and don't bother."

While Emma and Lulu were down for the mail, Florence was too restless to sit still. She wondered how her father and her friends would take the news of her broken engagement. She was a little ashamed of herself for thinking so little of them in this last absorbing month. But now, mail day, and the prospect of letters filled her with uneasiness. She walked out into the garden. Mana and Vida, free from restraint, were playing circus with

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all the force of their lungs, shouting, leaping, turning hand-springs, jumping from the veranda railing to the grass, doing audience and performers combined. She looked on at the feats of strength and agility, and though her heart occasionally turned over with alarm at their narrow escapes and foolhardy attempts, she did not utter a word of protest.

Wandering on she found Mrs. Ross seated on a camp-stool out in the brightest patch of sunlight in the garden, with a towel over her shoulders and her grey hair spread out in a curly mop to dry. She had been washing it in lemons.

“Getting anxious about your letters?” she asked as Florence threw herself on the warm grass beside her. “I always do, and washing my hair distracts my mind. When I am waiting I always fill up the time with some kind of work.

“I do feel nervous,” said Florence.

“I know,” said Mrs. Ross. Her face was shrouded in a mass of silvery curls, but she parted a lock to give Florence a beaming look of affection. “Though I’m sure it will be all right! I get worried every mail day about William. So many things can happen in a month; it’s lucky one doesn’t worry all the time. I only begin to get anxious when the *Suez* is sighted.

“Here they come!” screamed Vida and Mana, racing

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down the driveway and escorting Emma and Lulu up the garden walk, with a fine imitation of royal cavalry.

"There's a letter from William," Emma called out.

"And none for you, Miss Florence," screamed Lulu, with a ring of triumph in her voice — not from malice, but mere joy in the fact that she was giving a startling piece of intelligence. Florence stared blankly. Mrs. Ross snatched her letter and read it hastily, throwing out bits of information to the surrounding audience.

"He says it's snowing in New York — think of snow in April! No, the letter's dated March 15th. He can't come home this time before Christmas. Encloses a check. Well, he *is* a good boy. Oh! he's had his photograph taken. I wish he'd sent one. He will when he gets the prints. Love to Emma, and Lulu, and everybody. Oh, my dear," she went on, as though it were part of William's letter, "and there's no mail for you."

There was a scream from Lulu. "Vida, you jumped on the flower beds! I see your footprints!"

"We didn't hurt anything!"

"Well, you might have! Hurry up! We're awfully late for Sunday-school. You should have gone on without me."

"We're not going to-day," said Mana. "The Queen telephoned that she would send her carriage to take us for a drive."

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"Then why aren't you dressed?" Lulu always had the last word. "Go and get Bella to help you. I'm in a hurry."

"Mrs. Ross," said Florence, still sitting stricken on the grass. "What shall I do? I'm frightened at not getting a letter from anybody."

"Perhaps they missed the mail. I know once the trains were snowbound, and William's letter arrived too late to catch the steamer. I had to wait over another month for news, and I was frightened to death."

"But my people live in San Francisco. The letters don't have to cross the Continent —"

"They may have missed the steamer."

"Not all of them — I should get at least one. I ought to go home. Perhaps they are angry with me."

"My dear Florence," said Mrs. Ross, taking her hair by the ends and shaking it in the sunlight to dry. "All the more reason for *not* going home. Stay right on here till they get good-natured again."

"But, Mrs. Ross," Florence stammered a little, "I — I haven't any more money. I was sure my father would send me that check for a thousand dollars. He forgot about it at the last moment, and gave me some money for my trip and said he'd send the check by the next mail. There was no hurry — I didn't think I'd need it at all — and now —"

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“My dearest girl,” said Mrs. Ross, “if you are worrying about the expense of living here, put it out of your head. If your father sends the money next mail well and good, if he does not, never mind. I am glad to have you with me for just as long as you want to stay.”

The young girl caught Mrs. Ross’s plump little hand, damp, and smelling of lemons, and kissed it gratefully.

“You are so good,” she said, “but I’m not going to be a burden on you. I know it’s hard enough as it is for you to make both ends meet.”

“You are as dear to me as my own daughter,” said the voice under the grey mop.

“I feel like one of the family, Mrs. Ross, but really it’s because I like you and am enjoying myself so much here that I want to stay on, and because I have felt ashamed to go back with my explanations. But now I feel as though it were my duty to return at once — ”

They were diverted from their conversation by the arrival of a very handsome barouche, with footman and coachman, drawn by a span of fine horses.

“It’s the Queen’s carriage,” said Mrs. Ross. “I wonder why it is,” she added fretfully, “that these stylish teams always paw up the gravel so much more than livery stable horses?”

Vida and Mana came skipping excitedly toward them. “Won’t you come with us, Miss Florence?” Mana

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asked. "Lulu generally goes, but she went off to Sunday-school."

"I don't feel very much like it, dear Mana."

"Go along," said Mrs. Ross decisively. "You're tired and worried, and a drive in the open air will do you all the good in the world. When you get back we'll talk things over seriously."

"We were looking forward to your coming," said Vida. Florence jumped up, kissed them both, and went for her hat and gloves. The two Princes exchanged a solemn glance of gratification.

The young girl sat in the back seat between the two boys as the carriage bowled down the wide street. It was a warm, fragrant Honolulu morning; though the church bells were ringing the streets looked busy, for it was mail day. There had been light showers during the night, which gave the trees, dotted over with white and scarlet blossoms, the grass and hedges a freshly-washed look and laid the dust in the roads.

"Let's talk about railway trains," said Vida.

"No," said Mana, "I like the little rooms that go up and down. It must be funny to walk into a little room, shut the door, and then have it go up in the air, with you in it."

"Like the magic carpet," said Vida. The boys had listened to Florence's tales of civilization, and mixed them up somewhat with her equally entertaining fairy stories.

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“If we had a magic carpet,” said Mana invitingly, “where would we go?”

“We are on the carpet now,” said Florence, in that matter-of-fact style that enchanted her listeners and gave an air of reality to her wildest statement. She cast aside her troubles and turned her attention to entertaining her two friends. “Don’t you remember,” she went on, “how tired we were this morning, when we lived in a big, ugly, dark town called London? There was a fog over the place, making it like night, so that the lamps had to be lighted. You are two little boys who sell matches in the street, and I am a flower-girl. Ah, weren’t we unhappy this morning?”

“I felt so cold and wet,” said Mana, who had a lively imagination.

“Nobody would buy my matches,” said Vida, “and we hadn’t anything to eat all day.”

“We lay down under a tree to rest,” Mana went on.

“That was in the park,” said Florence.

“In the park, of course. The bears and lions roared at us. You know Captain Leigh-Garrett has the skins of lions and bears, and we asked him where they came from and he said he caught them in the streets of London.”

“Then I came along and found you lying on the grass. You called me Flossie because we were old friends. I only had rags on and my flowers were all wilted.”

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“How did we get here?” asked Vida.

“Don’t you remember,” cried Mana excitedly. He loved this game which Florence had taught them of make-believe. “It was that old piece of carpet the beggar man put over you. All you had in the world to eat was a slice of pineapple, and you gave it to him for his supper, and that’s why he put the carpet over you to keep you warm.”

“Yes, I remember,” said Vida. “We were sleeping in a barrel.”

“And you always kept the old piece of carpet,” said Florence, “and carried it about with you, but you did not know it was a magic one that gave you every wish you made when you were sitting on it. We spread it out under the trees to protect us from the wet and damp.”

“Then you said,” interrupted Mana rapturously, “‘I wish we had something to eat, I am hungry,’ and right there, out of the ground, came a beautiful party, with cake and ice-cream.”

“Then Vida wished a wish,” said Florence. “What was it?”

“I — I — ” Vida hesitated. “Oh, yes. I wished we had some good clothes, and suddenly we found ourselves beautifully dressed in white duck, with straw hats and coloured handkerchiefs, and your poor old rags” — his glance travelled over Florence with approval — “changed

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into a lovely yellow linen, and the old bonnet turned into a sweet little hat trimmed with blue flowers, and your bare feet had high-heeled shoes, with real gold buckles."

"Then *I* wished," said Florence. "I said — don't you remember? 'These clothes are so light and thin that I'm cold. I wish we were in the most beautiful country in the world, where the sun is always shining, and the skies are always blue; where the people are kind and handsome, and the ruler is a happy king who never goes to war, or does cruel, unjust things.'"

"And then the carpet rose up into the air," said Mana, "and flew and flew."

"And here we are!" said Vida.

While they were talking the two Princes often stopped to lift their hats in response to numerous salutations from the passing native people. The boys were punctilious in responding to the most humble recognition. A row of bare-footed native girls sat in the shadow of a wall on the narrow pavement, stringing flowers. One of them ran forward and tossed a couple of wreaths into the carriage. Mana and Vida, after politely offering them to Florence, put them about their own necks complacently.

"What a lovely perfume," said Florence.

"They look like ropes of gold," remarked Mana.

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"I wish you always lived with us," said Vida. "It has been so happy at home since you came."

"Suppose," Mana was struck with a sudden bright idea, "suppose you marry somebody and live here always?"

"Whom shall I marry?"

"Captain Leigh-Garrett?" suggested Mana.

"Oh, no," said Vida. "I don't like him at all. He makes fun of us and calls us 'princelings,' and laughs. He is always laughing."

"You can't have Mr. Maxwell," said Mana.

"Why not?" asked Florence.

"Because of Mrs. Landry!" he said in a tone of finality. "Oh, I know! Count Tatsu! He's nice and always polite. He calls us 'Your Highness.'"

"But he'd take me to Japan," objected Florence, "and I want to live in Honolulu. Wouldn't it be nice if I had a fine house here, and you could both come and stay with me, and when you go to the coast to school you'd come back every year and spend your vacations at my house!"

"When we grow up," said Vida, "will you marry us?"

"But I can't have two husbands."

"Why not?" asked Mana.

She was casting about for a suitable explanation of the marriage laws, when the carriage, to her surprise, turned

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into the palace grounds, the soldiers at the gate presenting arms in honour of the Princes.

“Oh!” cried Florence, “we oughtn’t to go in here.”

“We always do,” said the boys, “just to pay our respects to the King.”

“But I don’t want to see him! Really, you should have told me!”

It was too late to turn back. They drove through gardens laid out in beds of flowers, winding paths bordered by shrubs and palms, to the stone steps at the side entrance of the palace. The King was breakfasting at a table set out on the terrace, surrounded by a group of retainers, sitting on mats at a respectful distance. He rose at the sight of Florence, and came down the steps, offering his hand to help her alight from the carriage. He looked very cool and fresh in white flannels, with a rose in his buttonhole.

Mana and Vida explained the young girl’s presence as they all walked up the steps, the Princes returning the respectful bows of the retainers by wide sweeps of their straw hats.

“I am glad to see you, Miss Van Voorhis,” said the King. “May I hope that you will have a cup of coffee with me?”

She declined, but the Princes were not so backward in accepting the invitation and drew up their chairs to

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the table with alacrity. Florence felt somewhat embarrassed at first, but the King's informal pleasant manner soon made her feel at ease, especially as he went on with his breakfast quite simply, after giving her a seat. The meal was a strange one for breakfast. A small baked sucking pig, roasted breadfruit, squid and a calabash of *poi*. There was no sign of the coffee the King had so hospitably offered; he was drinking some kind of white wine in a tall slim glass.

"We are not real people, at all, your Majesty," said Mana.

"Aren't you?" asked the King seriously. "It is strange how my eyes deceive me."

"No, we came from London this morning on a piece of magic carpet."

"I hope you had a pleasant journey."

"We did," said Vida joyously. "We had three wishes. We wanted a—" he looked about the table—"a banquet."

"And we wished to come to a country that was the most beautiful in the world ruled over by a monarch, the most — the most —"

"Contented?" said the King laughing. "That's me."

"Yes," said Mana, "you know in fairy-land they always eat a banquet."

"To be sure," said the King. "And what was your third wish?"

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Mana's imagination failed him.

"You did not, by any chance," suggested Kalakaua, "wish for a box of soldiers, did you?"

"Yes, yes!" cried Mana and Vida in one voice. "That was our very wish!"

"By the strangest chance," said the King, with a smile at Florence, "two boxes of soldiers arrived by the *Suez* this very morning!"

He murmured a few words in Hawaiian and one of the attendants, bent nearly double in respectful obeisance, backed out a side door.

The Princes deserted the banquet promptly on the advent of the two boxes; they sat on the floor to open them, pulling out tissue paper and excelsior with feverish impatience. They were splendid soldiers; some on horseback, some running with fixed bayonets; there were Zulus with spears, there were little tents, cannon, and even a clump of cocoanut trees. The Princes were in ecstasies of delight.

"Did Mr. Maxwell speak to you about the surf-party?" asked the King.

"Yes, indeed, Your Majesty, it's so good of you. I'd rather see a thing like that than the finest ball that ever was given."

"But you're coming to the ball, too?"

"I'm afraid," said Florence, "that I won't be able to go. I am leaving on this steamer."

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There were sudden wails from the Princes on the floor.

“Leave Honolulu!” cried Kalakaua, with almost as much dismay as the boys. “I hoped you were going to pay us a long visit.”

“I meant to, but the mail came in to-day —”

“No bad news, I hope?”

“There was no news, Your Majesty. I didn’t get any letters at all!”

“That’s strange,” said the King. “There must have been some mistake.”

“I don’t understand it,” said Florence. “I expected letters from some girl-friends and my aunts, but it is my father’s letter —”

“But that should not necessitate your return so soon,” said the King. “Forgive me, Miss Van Voorhis, but we all take a great interest in you here, and you have made many friends in Honolulu who would be sorry indeed to lose you.”

The tears rose to Florence’s eyes. “I love Honolulu, Your Majesty,” she said, “my life is very uninteresting at home and everything here is so pleasant. But my father didn’t send me — I mean not getting any letters —”

“Miss Van Voorhis,” said the King, “will you let me be your banker? There must be some mistake that can

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easily be rectified, and please have no hesitation in accepting any help that I can offer.”

“Oh, I couldn't, I couldn't,” said Florence, “my father was to send me a check for a thousand dollars. I can't understand why it hasn't come.”

“But let me —”

“No, no, I couldn't,” she looked distressed.

“Well, let us talk it over and see if there is not some other way round.”

“Don't go, Miss Florence.” Mana was sitting on the floor at her feet, holding to her dress. Vida, with his hands full of excelsior, leaned over the back of her chair, both of them looking anxiously but hopefully at Kalakaua.

“I have it!” said the King. “A government position! You are very foolish not to accept a loan from me, but if you prefer to be independent you can take a government position.”

Florence smiled. “I'm afraid it's just the same thing disguised. But I would like to stay on in Honolulu.”

“I'm afraid it will only mean tiding over a month or two. Let me think! Botanist! Do you know anything about botany? I want some Hawaiian plants and wild flowers classified.”

“No,” said Florence, “I don't know a thing about flowers, even how to grow the simplest ones.”

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“Inspector of prisons?”

“Oh, no! It would break my heart to see people shut up from this beautiful place.”

“Librarian?” the King went on. “No, that is hard work and you’d have to stay indoors. Could you teach drawing? I can easily give you a place in the government school. Only an hour a week.”

“I can draw a little, but not well enough to teach.”

“Could you draw a fish?”

“A fish?” Florence looked surprised.

“We have many strange ones here,” said his Majesty. “I am writing a book about the different varieties, and I want to have some drawings made of them and coloured, for they have all the tints of the rainbow. I do not care for an artistic picture, all I want is careful drawing, like a map, with the colours faithfully copied.”

“I might do that,” said Florence doubtfully.

“Good!” said the King. “I will tell my fishermen to be on the lookout for rare specimens, and when they catch one they must take it to you on the instant. The colours fade very quickly, you know. Would a hundred dollars a month be enough? Payable in advance,” he added, smiling.

“Too much!” said Florence. “I’d have to be busy all the time to earn that.”

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“No,” said the King. “You see, I am paying you for your time. It is a kind of retaining fee, and you are to hold yourself in readiness at any moment of the day to paint fish.”

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Riding the Surf

I SUPPOSE I ought to be getting ready," said Florence. The whole family were in the bower, where Mrs. Ross had come to complain bitterly that she had not been invited to the surf-riding party.

"The carriage won't be here till eight o'clock," said Emma, "and it's only half past six."

"I thought we'd have a late dinner to-night," said Mrs. Ross. "You won't need any for they always give a native feast when there's any Hawaiian entertainment going."

"Perhaps I won't like it, and may not be able to eat anything."

"Yes, you will, Chicken cooked underground, and fish wrapped in *ti* leaves and baked on the hot stones are good enough for anybody, and you'll need it, for surf-riding is very exhausting. I must say I wish Emma were going. Heaven knows skimming over the top of breakers has no charms for me. I've seen

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whole canoe loads of people sent flying through the air, head over heels. It would not be a very dignified position for a lady of my age."

"I'm sure the King would have asked you both," said Florence, genuinely distressed, "if it were anything important."

"*Awe!*" cried Mrs. Ross, still more aggrieved. "I thought it was Mr. Maxwell's party! So it was His Majesty who issued the invitations!"

"Oh, Aunt Vally!" said Emma, who was leaning in the doorway. "You know the King is constantly giving little parties to different people. He can't always invite everybody."

"*We* are not everybody!" said her Aunt severely. "You think very little of your position. When you go on the *Mohawk* you dance with the Paymaster, and the last time we had tea on the *Stupendous* the only person who paid you any attention was a midshipman only so high."

"He was such a nice little boy, Aunt Vally."

"They're officers of the gun-room!" cried Lulu. She was tightly wedged into her little rocking-chair, listening eagerly to the conversation.

"I don't suppose the officers of a ship can dance with the people they like best," said Florence. "They have to entertain."

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"I know," said Lulu, "they have to be nice to the ladies who've given them dinners."

"Mr. Todd always dances with me," said Emma tearfully, "when I go on the *Mohawk*. The Captain of the *Pawtucket* doesn't dance at all and the next highest officer is the Navigating Lieutenant, and I'm sure I'd be afraid of him he's so cross-looking."

"Lieutenant Danby says he's a regular aristocrat," Lulu occasionally stumbled over long words, "and bosses the men terribly."

"Perhaps you ought to begin to dress now, Florence," said Mrs. Ross.

"I hate to keep you waiting for dinner. Please don't, you must be hungry."

"*We're* not hungry," said Mana. "We went to see Princess Likelike this afternoon and —"

"We've been eating crabs and *poi* all day!" said Vida.

"Your manners were perfectly awful!" interposed Lulu. "You know I've told you a hundred times that when you are lying down to eat you shouldn't kick up your heels."

"You should recline on one elbow like a gentleman," said Mrs. Ross. "If you could have seen Prince Lunalilo pick a shark's fin —"

"But the Princess Likelike was lying flat on her b —"

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“Oh!” screamed Lulu shrilly.

“Bosom!” concluded Vida triumphantly.

“Telephone for Mamma Ross!” called Bella from the hall.

“Lee came up here to-day,” said Lulu when Mrs. Ross had left hastily. “He took Bella to Chinatown and she came back with a bag of dried *lichee* and two jugs of preserved ginger — Lee’s Bella’s sweetheart!”

“I hope she won’t be married soon,” said Emma. “I don’t know how we’d get on without her.”

“She wouldn’t marry a Chinaman, would she?” asked Florence aghast.

“Many of the native women do,” said Emma. “They make very good husbands. No matter how poor a Chinaman is he can always afford a servant for his wife.”

“Lee is going to open a grocery store,” said Lulu, who always knew everybody’s business, “and he says he’ll buy Bella a sewing machine with a little China boy to run it, and she shall wear velvet *holakus* every day. He’s saving up money. He showed Bella his bank book.”

Mrs. Ross came back breathless and beaming. “It was the King’s chamberlain!” she said, “asking us to the surf-party. He said the King thought Mr. Maxwell had asked us, and Mr. Maxwell thought the King had, and they’ve just found it out.”

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“Oh, I’m so glad!” said Florence. “Then we’d better dress!”

There was a hurry and a scramble for Emma and Mrs. Ross to get ready. The daughters of the Kamehamehas were not too proud to accept a belated invitation. Florence dressed with trembling fingers, occasionally stopping to draw a long breath, for the thought of meeting Christopher Maxwell gave her a strange suffocating feeling of excitement that was almost pain.

It was dark when they reached the King’s place at Waikiki, for the moon had not yet risen. Some natives who were standing at the gate waving torches, called out a cheerful “*aloha*” as the carriage turned into the grounds. There was a strong salt smell of the sea in the air, and a roar as of great waves close at hand.

“There’s a break in the reef here,” Mrs. Ross explained. “That’s why the King chose this place for surfing.”

Down on the beach a bonfire lighted up the edge of the waves, reflecting oddly in the wet sand. It showed the outlines of a long narrow fern-leaf structure like an arbour on poles, and the shadowy figures of natives who were preparing the feast.

The carriage drew up before a low, wide building, decorated in front by rows of Japanese lanterns. It was brilliantly lit up within and there was the sound of

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twanging guitars and laughing voices. A bevy of native girls decorated the party with wreaths as they stepped up on the veranda.

As Florence entered the room in the wake of Mrs. Ross and Emma, she blinked a little under the bright light, and the strange, almost imperceptible contraction crossed her face. She looked a slim, radiant creature, with bright colour in her cheeks and heightened expectation in her sparkling eyes.

Mrs. Ross was at her best in the presence of Kala-kaua. Neither her peevishly aggrieved nor her resentfully aggressive manner could resist his respectful homage, and she assumed, quite naturally, a noble graciousness worthy of her great name. Even Emma looked less fierce, and the soft Hawaiian vowels sounded more sweetly on her lips than the rougher English she had never quite mastered.

The party was a small one and it gave Florence a pleasant homelike feeling to see that she knew every one present, and was no longer a stranger in Honolulu. She shook hands warmly and smilingly with the King. Dick Leigh-Garrett bowed low before her. The widow, in a smart green frock elaborately be-ruffled, greeted her gaily, the Bonner girls screamed a welcome in chorus; Curtis Iaukea gave her a courtly salutation, and she turned to nod with quiet friendliness to Harry

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the half-white before she dared raise her eyes to Christopher Maxwell's face. She had felt the magnetism of his presence from the moment she entered the room though he had not come forward nor spoken a word. They met as they always had, like two old and tried friends of many years standing. All the worries and agitations of the last few days vanished from her mind under the warmth of his glance. He held her hand closely in his for a moment, and then drew it within his arm and together they followed the rest of the party out across the lawn to the little *lanai* on the beach where the feast was spread on banana leaves.

The King took the head of the table with Mrs. Ross on his right. That lady sank to the ground with one graceful movement, while Mrs. Landry, on the other side of Dick Leigh-Garrett, fluttered her ruffles and flounced into position with some difficulty. The rest took their places, and Max helped Florence to get down with as little awkwardness as possible. She tucked her feet under her skirts and was just about to speak, when a touch on her arm warned her in time to bow her head while the King murmured a short grace in Hawaiian.

There were no plates, no knives, no forks. The finger bowls were cocoanut shells filled with perfumed water; fern leaves supplied the place of napkins. A sucking pig roasted whole graced the centre of the spread, sur-

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rounded by strange parcels done up in green leaves, and calabashes containing shark-fins, breadfruit dumplings and white *poi* that looked like bill-stickers' paste. The attendants were native girls with wreaths of flowers twined in their hair and garlanded about their necks. One of them served Florence with a portion of fish done up in a hot banana leaf. She looked doubtfully about at the others, hardly knowing what to do with it.

"Fish has such a delicate flavour," said the King seriously, "that it should only be eaten with the fingers. Even silver is too coarse."

"I feel as though it were unprofessional for me to eat fish," said Florence. "You know shoe-makers' children always go barefoot and surely a fish-artist shouldn't eat her own models."

The King laughed. "These are only mullet," he said, "your kind are remarkable exceptions."

"Do you know," she turned to Maxwell, "that I have a government position? I am the Royal Fish Draughtsman to His Majesty, King Kalakaua!"

"Miss Van Voorhis," the King explained in answer to Max's puzzled glance, "has been good enough to help me with my book on Hawaiian fishes."

"For a salary," added Florence.

Max's eyes brightened. "If I can read between the lines," he said, "that means that you are to stay on in

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Honolulu, for it will take some time before His Majesty's great work is completed; and if you once start in, you know, you can't leave it unfinished."

"I sent for my fishermen to-day," said the King, "and offered a prize for strange specimens with orders for them to go to you at once. They find the most extraordinary things in their nets in all sorts of queer colours and shapes. I have seen such definitely tinted plaids, that I believe many a Scotsman could find his own tartan on some of them."

"I was afraid you might have had some idea of leaving on this steamer," said Christopher Maxwell, in a low voice to Florence, as the King turned to speak to Mrs. Ross. "One never knows what news a mail may not bring after a month's interval. I was almost afraid to ask you, but it has been lying heavy on my heart through these trying days of business."

"I didn't get any letters at all," she replied. "At first I did think of going back at once because you see I — I mean my father didn't — well, I'll tell you, Mr. Maxwell, my check didn't come."

"Oh, my dear girl," said Maxwell earnestly, "surely you know me well enough not to let a matter like that —"

"It's all settled. The King was awfully good and wanted to be my banker, but I never borrowed money

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in my life and I couldn't, you know, and then he offered me a government position — that sounds fine, doesn't it? And now I'm so proud of it I don't care if the old check never comes."

"There's sure to have been some mistake somewhere. Perhaps a mail bag was lost. That occasionally happens, you know."

"Well, I do feel anxious at not hearing from my father, but I'm not going to worry about it. I have the happy faculty that is almost a genius of shutting the door on worries and losing the key. There!" she said, with a little gesture, "it is thrown away and we won't think about it any more."

"You're right," said Max. "This is too glorious an occasion to mar by a single cloud. I appreciate it, I can tell you, for I had to make a terrible effort to get here."

"Not come to-night?" she said, looking up at him blankly. The rest of the table were talking gaily. Max lowered his voice.

"I was detained at the plantation. You know I take a great interest in my labourers and they've been getting into a fearful mess at Malaea, rioting and killing each other. At any other time I'd have stayed there to sift the whole affair to the bottom, but I'm afraid I rushed through it and all for your sake. Nothing seemed half so

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important as seeing you to-night, and hearing from your own lips that you were to stay on in Honolulu.”

With the knowledge that she loved him Florence had been more afraid than anxious to meet Max again. But now, as they sat murmuring apart from the others, the undercurrent of deep feeling in his voice reassured her, and though he talked only of the plantation and his workmen, there was unusual seriousness in the grey eyes that met hers, an intensity in his glance that filled her heart with an agitating emotion.

“I’m trying to replace my coolies by Japanese labourers,” he went on, still speaking aside to Florence. “I like them better, and as many of them bring their families with them and stay on here after their service is up, I think they make a better class of immigrants and are less a menace to the country than the Chinese. The row we’ve just had was between the last of my coolies and a newly imported batch of Japs; several were killed on both sides. I’ve been trying to get at the bottom of it. It is an intricate problem to manage so many people with justice and humanity. But I mustn’t bore you with all this — and yet —” he looked down at her earnestly — “You are the kind of woman to help —”

“Try some raw fish!” cried Mrs. Ross from across the table. “It is mixed with red-peppers and grated *kukui* nuts, I know you’ll like it.”

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“It *is* good,” said Florence absently. Vivid scarlet tinted her lips and her cheeks glowed with suppressed emotion. She saw nothing but friendliness in the widow’s sarcastic glances and forgetting that she meant to be cold to Dick Leigh-Garrett, she smiled across the table at him quite frankly, only increasing the Captain’s ill-concealed jealousy.

“Lee made some raw-fish salad for Mrs. Worthing at the hotel,” went on Mrs. Ross. “He says she had not been able to eat anything for days and it helped her wonderfully. I believe that is all she lives on now, with milk and *poi*.”

“We had a sick man here once,” said the King, “an Englishman, who was travelling, and put off on account of his health. He could not eat anything and was slowly dying of starvation. Some aggravated form of dyspepsia. I sent down my servants with *poi* and raw fish; he began to get well from that day and now he’s a member of parliament.”

The Bonner girls were screaming a jargon of Hawaiian and English at the other end of the table with Curtis Iaukea; Emma glowering fiercely but quite happy, as they all dipped their fingers into the same calabash. That seemed bad enough to Florence, but when Betty Bonner rolled a ball of *poi* on her finger by a single flip and handed it across the table to Harry, she looked the other way.

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Captain Leigh-Garrett was eating breadfruit dumpings, picking them out of the calabash by means of a straw, and his drink was iced champagne from a large goblet, for he disdained the cocoanut milk served in the shell that Florence found refreshing. He was evidently quarrelling in an undertone with Mrs. Landry who nibbled a chicken's wing with an expression of haughty disfavour. Suddenly she gave a shriek. Dick had overturned an inverted bowl and a number of live shrimps skipped wiggling about the table. Florence recoiled in alarm, but was still more horror-stricken when Mrs. Ross reached forward, daintily picked them up one by one, and ate them alive.

The King laughed at Florence's exclamation of horror. "You shouldn't be shocked at that," he said, "you eat oysters alive."

"I know," said Florence, "but they don't wiggle."

"What if they yelled," said Dick Leigh-Garrett. "Fancy an oyster screaming as he went down your throat."

"Don't," cried Florence. The native attendant handed her a slice of pineapple, the size of a dinner plate. Max cut it for her with his pen-knife into little triangles.

"It is curious," she said, glancing up at him, "how becoming *leis* are to some people and how frightful

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others look in them. Your jasmine buds are like a fillet of pearls."

Dick's wreath of roses, tilted rakishly on one side, gave him a decidedly bacchanalian air; and the King's "rope of gold," as Mana called it, rested on his thick black hair like a royal crown.

"When I am away from home," said Kalakaua, "and meet any one who raves about the islands and how they would love to live the free indolent life of the tropics and all that, I say there are two tests. If a wreath of flowers is becoming to him and he likes the smell of cocoanut oil I advise him to buy a ticket for Hawaii; otherwise he had better follow the beaten track and put his name down for a Cook's excursion."

"Cook will be bringing his tourists here some day," said Florence. "Every one says Hawaii is advancing rapidly."

"For my part," said the King, "I would like to advance backwards, so to speak. We are leaving all that is free and wholesome and noble behind us here in Hawaii. Even the old sports are finer than anything civilization can offer us. There is nothing I would like better than to slide down Punch-bowl on one of those old Hawaiian sleds you see in the museum. That is a magnificent feat. Not that I can do it, but I'd like to try."

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"You can see the old slides quite plainly on the slope of the mountain," said Florence. "I was there the other day and noticed them."

"When I was a young girl," observed Mrs. Ross, "I remember seeing Prince Lunalilo standing erect on a sled and flying down one of the steepest slides. He was excommunicated from church, I remember, so he had to give it up."

"The first duty of the missionary," growled Dick, "seems to have been a general forbidding of anything that was amusing."

"I have a fine old fellow here to-night," said the King, "who is to ride the surf for us in the old-fashioned manner on a board. He is the only one left who can come in standing."

Coffee was served on the beach where a semicircle of chairs had been arranged facing the sea. A little to one side rose a small platform on stilts built over the water for the band. The King took the centre chair with Mrs. Ross on his right. Captain Leigh-Garrett hung back from the widow, trying to join Florence and Max, but fell a prey to the Bonner girls who pounced on him with screams and carried him off to sit with them. Mrs. Landry with a set smile on her face took the chair on Kalakaua's left where even Curtis Iaukea's charming attention failed to soften her mood. Emma

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and Harry sought an extreme of the semicircle where they sat very silent and very near together. Max purposely detained Florence that they might take a position somewhat detached from the others.

“It is all so incongruous,” said Florence to the King, “Your Majesty gives us live shrimps served with champagne, and after fingerbowls of cocoanuts we are drinking our coffee out of *Sèvres china*.”

“Not more incongruous than the people,” said Kalakaua. “Could you imagine more widely different characters than our friend Max here, the successful American, type of the most advanced civilization, and my poor old Kaipo, the surf-rider, survivor of a fast dying race?”

“Your country is prosperous and rich,” said Florence. “Your Majesty rules over a land that shows few signs of decay.”

“You do not know Hawaii,” said the King seriously. “I hold my throne against the advance of civilization by sheer will-power and the love of my people. But they are going fast. Old Kaipo could show you great churches built of coral that he remembers crowded with people; they are empty ruins now. We are too weak and trusting and simple for civilization. The very virtues of the Hawaiians are their undoing. I would have more respect for my race if we had fought to the bitter end like the

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Indians. But we give up all and die. I feel now as though we were making our last stand; after us the deluge."

"Issue a royal decree, Rex," screamed Polly Bonner.

The King's expression changed, and he laughed as he drew out a gold cigarette case with a crown in diamonds on the lid.

"We hereby decree," he said, "that all ladies present who wish to smoke are commanded to do so, while those who do not wish it are forbidden to touch the weed under the ban of my royal displeasure."

"Isn't it terrible to live in an absolute monarchy," cried Betty Bonner, saucily helping herself from the gold box and handing it on to Mrs. Landry and her sister. "Rex is a regular Tzar."

The band boys with their instruments under their arms ran along the beach, and waiting for a receding wave dashed up to their platform, the last one getting caught in a swirl of water. There was applause from the party on the sand.

"Honolulu is always reminding me of the theatre," said Florence. "This is like a scene in an *opera bouffe*."

Maxwell was at her feet, resting an elbow on the edge of her chair. "Did you ever see a more wonderful drop curtain?" he said, looking out to sea.

The incoming tide creamed on the sand before them; the surface of the water shimmered and sparkled,

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occasionally breaking into wild confusion as the great waves raced in, rising high above the horizon line, and then subsiding and spreading out upon the beach. Diamond Head towered above them, all the little water courses on its rugged slope glinting like silver threads. The moon had risen in a clear and starlit sky, painting a pathway across the water to their very feet. The night was so brilliant that the wild convolvulus that grew upon the edge of the sand showed vividly green, the flowers picked out in sparkling tints of pink and white and blue.

“The sea looks dangerous here,” said Florence. “It seems a fearful turmoil to go out into with a little canoe.”

The Hawaiian quartette began to sing, accompanying themselves with guitars and the buzzing little *eukaleles*. The pleasant sound floating over the water brought out the rest of the natives from the *lanai* who threw themselves on the sand to listen to the music, occasionally joining in the chorus, their sweet voices faultlessly true in time and key.

Maxwell turned slightly, resting his head upon his hand that he might look up at his companion.

The King and Mrs. Ross were talking to each other in Hawaiian with an air of graciousness and mutual respect; Curtis Iaukea bent over the back of Mrs. Landry's chair; Emma and Harry still sat close together

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joining in the songs; while Dick and the Bonner girls amused themselves throwing lighted matches on the sands, exclaiming joyously when the little land crabs made off with them in zigzag tracks of fire.

“Did you ever wonder,” said Max softly, “at the secret of affinity? Doesn’t it seem strange that you recognize some people at the first glance as your own kind?”

“And others,” said Florence, “whom you may respect and admire for really excellent qualities, but cannot like. They don’t seem as though they were made out of the same clay.”

“That’s just it. I believe God used different kinds of dust when he created man. Brick dust —”

“That means a good fellow,” said Florence. “And gold dust is honesty —”

“And some have specks of diamonds, and that’s genius, and some are plain garden loam, and some —” he laughed a little — “some are just mud.”

“I see,” said Florence. “The mud people recognize each other; you may be all garden loam, but if you have one speck of gold in you you know it at once when you meet another person who has the same.”

“Whatever it is,” returned Max, “that we are made of, it’s the same kind of dust clear through. I like to believe that destiny picks out one woman for one man

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and that we have been waiting for each other from the very beginning.”

“Perhaps,” and Florence’s voice trembled a little as she looked down into Maxwell’s face. The roar of the waves increased in volume till it drowned the sound of guitars and singing voices, and then, fading away, gave place to the sweet music, “It may be,” she went on, “that the lines of our life are drawn by Fate before we are born, with those who are to influence us for good or evil. Some begin close beside us and then branch off never to return. Others run along parallel but do not touch —”

“The line of my life,” said Max, “began far from yours in a different part of the world and yet it was drawing nearer and closer with every succeeding hour — and now —” he laid his hand on hers — “now that they have met —”

There was shouting from the natives on the beach. Old Kaipo came up to announce that it was time for the surf-riding to begin. Max quickly bent and kissed Florence’s hand before he jumped up to answer the summons. The Bonner girls carried her and Emma off to the house to dress while Curtis Iaukea took charge of the men. The King preferred to be a spectator of the sport and kept his seat. Mrs. Ross, with due regard to her dignity, remained with him; also Mrs. Landry

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who cared too much for her appearance to risk getting her hair wet.

Numbers of natives, men and girls, were already in the water; rising with the waves or darting through them like fishes. Out on the beach a group of young fellows had drawn up two canoes opposite the opening in the reef. The surf-party soon appeared in their bathing suits enveloped in long wraps.

"You must divide into groups," said the King. "We'll appoint captains, who must choose sides, as you do in charades."

"Oh, no," said Betty Bonner, "let the girls do that."

"You're right," said the King. "Then I appoint you and Miss Van Voorhis."

"I choose Emma!" said Betty.

"Polly Bonner," said Florence.

"Captain Leigh-Garrett," said Betty again. Dick hesitated for a moment and then, with a gesture of impatience walked over to her side.

"Mr. Maxwell," said Florence, and when Betty had chosen Curtis she called for Harry.

Florence cast off her wrap into the hands of a native girl and stepped into the canoe. She clung convulsively to a stout Hawaiian's slippery shoulders as he guided her to a seat that was little more than a slat fastened across the top. She and Max, Harry and Polly Bonner

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were sandwiched in between five natives. It seemed to Florence as though the whole thing would upset any minute.

“It’s all right,” shouted Max reassuringly in answer to some inarticulate gasps and screams. “The outrigger keeps it steady. Have you your paddle?”

“Yes, yes,” said Florence breathlessly.

There was a great deal of splashing and shouting. The canoes were pushed out into the water by a crowd of natives while the band played a rollicking air.

“Oh,” screamed Florence, to the broad brown back in front of her, “the waves are awful! This one coming looks as big as a mountain.”

The leader called out excitedly. Harry translated that they must all paddle hard to reach it before it broke.

“It will go right over us!” she cried.

“Alpine climbing!” shouted Max, as they mounted the slope of the wave, digging their short paddles into the water as though it were a solid substance; they hung dizzily for a moment on the crest and then slid down the other side into the trough of the sea.

Florence was cold at first and not a little frightened, but she clutched the paddle and followed the motions of the man in front of her whose brown back was lumpy with muscles.

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Another wave loomed up before them; ere they could reach it to climb the side it showed signs of breaking.

“*Eka! A we ka maki!*” cried the leader.

“Back! Back!” shouted Harry, and they paddled fiercely, the breaking wave foaming all about them. Then they started off again for the next one with increasing excitement. Florence began to warm up to the work as she understood what they were trying to do. Soon she was screaming with the rest: “*Makai! Hoki!*” as they paddled onward to catch another wave and climb its steep crest, flying down the other side like a sled on an ice path. They passed seven large rollers, and then came the difficult manoeuvre of turning between the waves without catching a breaker broadside on. With shouts and screams from the leader, and all paddling on the same side with cries of “*Wiki! Wiki!*” they spun around facing the shore just in time to escape a drenching. As it was they rocked in a smother of foam.

“Keep her head on!” called out Harry above the excited shouts of the Hawaiians. “If we swerve an inch we’ll be knocked into spilikins!”

“I know! I know!” cried Florence excitedly. They were all looking back over their shoulders waiting for a large unbroken wave.

“We want a big one that will carry us all the way to the shore,” cried Polly.

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“Here comes one!”

“No, wait,” Harry called out. “Follow the leader; when he shouts ‘*Hoki*’ go ahead!”

They allowed several rollers to pass, rising high on the top from whence they could plainly see, in the bright moonlight, the little semicircle on the beach; the group of natives and the band boys on their platform; for an instant only, and then they sank into a deep green hollow.

“*Hoki! Hoki! hoi!*” cried the leader. They dug their paddles into the water with all the strength of their arms. A great wave caught the stern at exactly the right angle and then, with cries of wild exhilaration from every throat the canoe flew towards the shore like an arrow from a bow. As it raced through the water, still propelled by the one great wave they rose in their seats, brandishing their paddles and screaming with the full force of their lungs.

The canoe grounded quietly on the beach where a group of natives pulled it ashore. Girls ran to meet them with bath-robos.

“I want to do it all over again!” cried Florence, as they threw themselves exhausted at the feet of the King and his party.

“It was glorious!” panted Max. He looked like a handsome friar lying on the sand in his long white robe.

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“Look! Look!” cried the King. “Here comes the other!”

They rose to their feet looking seaward. The band played madly, the natives cheered and Florence found herself screaming like the rest as the second canoe came spinning towards them.

“Wasn’t that bully!” cried Betty Bonner as she staggered up the sand. Some natives came out with trays of glasses and champagne, and while the party rested on the beach old Kaipo, dressed only in a loin cloth appeared carrying a long smooth board. Throwing one arm over it he swam out to sea.

“I’m so tired I’m nearly dead!” panted Betty Bonner lying at full length on the sand.

“I feel like a piece of string,” said Florence, “but I want to do it again.”

“Isn’t it very late?” asked Mrs. Ross.

“Long after midnight,” said Dick Leigh-Garrett. “But this moon will last till morning.”

Florence sat up and watched Kaipo’s progress. Only his head could be seen at intervals like a black speck on the burnished silver of the sea. “He is going faster than you would think,” said the King, “for he’s a famous swimmer; but of course he cannot make the speed of a canoe full of paddles.”

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Suddenly there was a cry that rose to a shout as Kaipo's dark figure appeared in silhouette against the sky. He was on his knees at first, but as he neared the shore he rose slowly erect. The board he stood on was invisible so that he seemed like a god of the air flying towards them, brandishing his paddle aloft like a spear.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Fish

MRS. ROSS went to sleep during the long drive from Waikiki to town, while Emma sang softly to herself. Florence, in spite of her bodily fatigue, for they had gone out into the sea again and again, was keenly wide awake. She lay back quietly, but her eyes were open and shining brightly as she lived over in her mind the happiest night of her life. It was a warm mild morning with the dawn breaking rose-pink over the Delectable Mountains; the trot of the horses and Emma's crooning were the only sounds that broke the stillness of the sleeping town.

"*Aue!*" cried Mrs. Ross, as the carriage turned into her gate. "Look! who are those men on my veranda?"

At least ten natives were gathered at the steps. Between the gate and the house Mrs. Ross had time to imagine a dozen different calamities.

"I wonder if the place has been on fire? I hope nobody is dead and they have come to break the news!"

THE FISH

The men were too smiling to be the bearers of evil tidings. One of them carried a strange looking parcel done up in green leaves, to which they all pointed excitedly as they talked in Hawaiian. Mana and Vida came running in their striped pajamas just as they fell out of bed, to see what was going on. One of the men, unwrapping the odd bundle displayed a brilliantly coloured, strange flat fish.

“The men say they are fishermen,” said Mrs. Ross, “and the King offered a reward —”

“Oh, it’s for me —” cried Florence.

“He says the King promised ten dollars to the one who found a rare fish and Punakiki has won it!”

“What are all the other men here for?” asked Florence.

“They are friends of Punakiki. They are going with him to the palace to claim the reward.”

“I told them,” said Emma, “that if they went at once they would find the chamberlain before he goes to bed for Curtis is sure to stay up for breakfast.”

The men gave the fish, laid out on its banana leaf wrapper, into Florence’s hands and took their departure in high spirits.

“Poor Punakiki!” she said, looking after them, “his ten dollars won’t last long with all those friends to share it.”

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“That is the native fashion,” said Mrs. Ross contemptuously, “as soon as a Hawaiian gets a penny he has to look up a friend to share it. They haven’t any sense at all.”

“You will have to paint the fish pretty quick, before it fades,” said Vida.

“Indeed, I will.”

“*Aue!*” cried Mrs. Ross. “Aren’t you going to sleep at all? I’m nearly dead. I can hardly keep my eyes open. You simply can’t go to work now.”

“Yes I can. I don’t feel a bit sleepy. Just look at those colours! Aren’t they wonderful! I don’t want to waste a minute.”

Florence was just in the mood for painting. She could not have slept in her present state of radiant happiness and she welcomed the idea of work with eagerness. She drank a cup of hot coffee that Bella brought to the bower. As Lulu was still asleep and no one gainsaid them, the Princes had their bowls of bread and milk served at once and ate their breakfast hurriedly, while Florence made her preparations. She laid the fish on the table and began setting out her colours. Vida and Mana ran for a glass of water, arranged a chair and offered their advice and encouragement.

“How can you set it up to draw it?” asked Mana. “You can’t see it very well lying down flat in the dish.”

THE FISH

"Yes, I can," said Florence confidently, pinning a paper to the board and sharpening her pencils.

The fish seemed easy to draw, with its large round eyes, well defined gills and fan-shaped fins. The artist measured it across with a piece of string and carefully drew in the outline, Mana and Vida watching her with breathless interest. She rubbed it out several times and had to make many measurements.

"It's like a map of Upolu," commented Mana.

"You can look, but you musn't make criticisms," said Florence. Her drawing certainly did not seem to resemble the original.

"Does a fish breathe through his ears?" asked Vida presently.

"He can't breathe at all," said Florence.

"Why not?"

"Oh, dear!" Florence was getting more and more nervous as she tried to draw in the head and eyes. "I don't know."

"Of course," said Mana reflectively, "he hasn't any air to breathe. But perhaps he takes in water the way we do air."

"Does he breathe water with his ears?" asked Vida persistently.

"They're not his ears," said Mana, "they're his gills and he breathes water with them."

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“Well, then,” said Vida, “does he hear with his gills?”

“Does he, Miss Florence?” asked Mana.

“Who?”

Vida repeated the question.

“It is strange,” she said, still working hurriedly, “but I don’t know anything about a fish.”

“Did you ever draw one before?” asked Vida, doubtfully regarding the strange hieroglyphics she was making on the paper.

“No, I never did, and I’d no idea they were so difficult.”

“I know what it looks like!” cried Vida excitedly, forgetting Florence’s request. “It’s the image of Princess Ruth!”

“She weighs four hundred pounds,” said Mana, “and her eyes stick out just like that!”

“It’s beginning to fade,” said Vida after a pause. “The edge of his fin was scarlet, don’t you remember, and now it’s pink!”

“Oh dear!” said Florence, “I hate to begin putting on the colour before I’ve finished the drawing.”

Lulu came in to order the boys off to bathe and dress.

“You will be in time for school for once, anyway,” she said. “You’ve been late every morning this week.”

“I couldn’t find my hat yesterday,” said Mana.

THE FISH

“And the day before I couldn’t find my shoes,” said Vida. “I went to play with Cissy Macfarlane and left them hanging on her gate and forgot all about them.”

“Why on earth did you take them off?” asked Lulu reproachfully.

“You can’t ever play with shoes on!” cried both the Princes at once.

“We’re the only boys at school that wear shoes,” went on Vida, evidently returning to a time-worn grievance. “I don’t see why we should wear them when nobody else does.”

“*Will* you go and take your bath?” Lulu suddenly screamed, losing her temper. She flew at the two boys like a little termagant, twisted her fists into the folds of their pajama coats and dragged them off protesting and mortally embarrassed to be so shamefully used before their friend.

At half-past eight Lulu and the Princes started to school, the two boys heart-broken at leaving Florence to her fascinating work without their help. Mrs. Ross and Emma were sleeping. All the house was quiet while the young artist worked on breathlessly, rubbing out, doing it over, measuring and changing until her paper turned to a sort of dingy grey. Suddenly the telephone bell rang. She waited to hear Bella’s footsteps in answer, but as there was not a sound, and thinking it might be some-

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thing important, she threw down her brushes and rushed to the telephone. "Norwegian bark *Vladimir* off Cocoa Head!"

Her "thank you" sounded like an exclamation of fury as she hung up the receiver and flew back to her work.

The drawing certainly did look ludicrously human with the grinning mouth and goggle eyes. She carefully studied the model and saw that the tints were changing fast. Making hasty mental notes she put the colours on strong, but in her hurry she did not wait for one wash to dry before laying on another, with the result that the scarlet of the fin ran into the blue stripes on the back, making a purple smear that was not at all like anything in nature. The beautiful silvery green of the scales she put in in a clear tint, but around the edges was a hard ridge she could not account for. She began to get more and more anxious and worried. The paper was greasy with the constant erasing of the pencil marks and took the colour in little patches. In the midst of her perplexity Bella came in on tip-toe to announce that a gentleman wished to see her in the parlour.

"A gentleman, at this hour!"

"He says no stop long."

Impatient and annoyed Florence walked into the sitting-room where a very embarrassed young man awaited

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her. He introduced himself as Mr. Lansing and it wasn't till he explained that he was a friend of Mr. Sprague's that she remembered having seen him before. He was one of the two good Samaritans who attended the miserable Walter on the memorable interview on the veranda.

"I will not detain you a moment," he said, "but Mr. Sprague sent me this packet which came by the mail steamer and begged that I would give it to you myself."

"But I don't wish to receive anything from Mr. Sprague," she said, refusing to touch it.

The young man laid the package on the table. "It is very important," he said. "He was afraid you would think it was some communication of his own and he begged me to say that it was your property."

While the young girl stood looking at him in bewilderment, Mr. Lansing bowed himself out and departed.

She turned the thing over in her hands. "My property!" she murmured, pulling off the wrapper. To her surprise, a number of letters fell out. Picking one up she read the superscription, "Mrs. Walter Sprague, Huapala Plantation, Maui, Hawaii." She understood it all in a flash. Her father had not received her explanatory letter and he and all her friends had taken it for granted — she shivered with horror. The name brought her narrow escape more vividly to her mind than any-

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thing else could have done. On one of the letters she recognized the round, crisp black hand of her father's writing. She picked it up and distastefully tearing off the envelope which she crumpled into a ball, she opened the sheet and discovered the draft for a thousand dollars made out to Florence Van Voorhis. She glanced through the letter — "Just leaving for the Yosemite — am writing this to catch the steamer in case we go off camping in the mountains. Don't want to miss the mail. I send the draft as it is, all you have to do is to sign it with your married name and be identified — Your old Dad misses you —" She could not read the rest, for she saw the words "Your husband" and tore it up hastily. Then she opened the others, one by one; they seemed to scorch her fingers and the phrases, "Tell dear Walter — Your island home — We wish you all happiness" — filled her with misery and loathing. Tucking the draft into her belt she looked about for some way to dispose of the fragments of her letters. A thin coil of smoke showed where Haka was burning dead leaves in a corner of the garden. She gathered up the torn papers, fled down a side path and snatching the stick out of his hand poked the hateful letters into the middle of the fire. Then suddenly remembering her work she ran back to the bower and taking up her drawing arranged her paints and turned to look at the model.

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Dismayed and surprised, she looked again. Fish and leaves and plate were gone. She called to Bella who rushed in terrified at the excited tones of her voice.

“Where is my fish?”

“Oh,” cried Bella blankly, “I think you all finish.”

“I was not finished with it! You should not touch things till I tell you.”

“Mamma Ross say ‘you finish?’ I say ‘yes, you all finish.’”

“I wasn’t half done with it.”

“Colour all gone. No more red, no more blue.”

“Don’t talk; go and bring it back at once!”

“No can!” cried Bella, waving her hands in the air distressfully.

“You must!”

“No can!”

“Why can’t you, in Heaven’s name?”

“Mamma Ross eat him!”

For a stupefied moment Florence stared at the Portuguese girl. “Do you mean to say you took my fish off and cooked it?”

“No cook it,” said Bella, beginning to cry. “Mamma Ross say ‘all finish?’ I say, ‘yes, all finish.’ She say ‘all right,’ she eat him raw.”

It had been an agitating morning. With no sleep the night before, the trouble with the drawing, and the shock

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of receiving those letters, Florence had begun to feel unnerved, but now this last catastrophe was too much. She fell into a rocking-chair and wept. At the sight of her dear young lady's distress, Bella began to cry aloud with roars and chokes and gurgles of penitence and despair.

Neither of them noticed the sound of wheels on the gravel, and were startled by a heavy step on the veranda. Bella, still weeping aloud, threw open the door. Florence, the tears wet upon her cheeks looked up. It was Kalakaua.

They were all three too astonished for a moment to speak. The King was the first to break the silence. "Pardon me," he said. "I am afraid you have had bad news. I will come another time."

"No, no," cried Florence, jumping up, "it isn't anything. I mean it is only the fish —"

"That is what brought me," said Kalakaua pleasantly. "Punakiki, Curtis said, had found a very rare specimen from his description of it, and as I did not feel sleepy after breakfast, I thought I'd drive up and see how you were getting on. Is this the drawing?"

The young artist checked a hasty impulse to spread her hands out over her morning's work.

The King regarded the extraordinary design in silence. She had managed to give a hideously human expression to the staring eye and protruding mouth;

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instead of the brilliant colours of the original it was apparently painted in mud, and the effect was not improved by several splashes of tears.

“Is this the fish?” he said, putting up his hand to hide the smile that quivered in the corner of his mouth. “You can never judge a drawing till you see the original.” He glanced about inquiringly.

Florence laughed hysterically. “Don’t look at it, Your Majesty,” she said; “it isn’t good. The drawing isn’t a bit like a fish or anything else that ever I saw on land or water.”

“Never mind,” he said kindly. “It is your first attempt. You will do better another time. But if you will give me the fish I can have it preserved in alcohol, as it is very rare.”

Bella had backed into the bedroom at the first sight of the King.

“No can!” she called out from the doorway, weeping afresh.

“What is the matter?” asked Kalakaua in astonishment.

“Mamma Ross eat him!”

The King laughed. He sat down to laugh. He tried hard to repress it, but the sight of the drawing propped up on the table, Bella’s purple countenance, and Florence’s rueful smile sent him off again until the tears

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rolled down his cheeks. He was wiping his eyes with his handkerchief and trying to get back his voice when the door suddenly burst open and the two Princes almost fell into the room. They rushed at Florence, convulsively catching her skirts. Before they had time to realize the unexpected presence of the King, Lulu, in hot pursuit, appeared at the doorway in a towering fury.

“How dare you run away from school?” she screamed. “I’ll have you locked up all day. You sha’n’t have a bite to eat! I’ll tell mother to whip you!” And then she saw the King, and turned pale with surprise and fright.

“This is not the way to speak to my nephews,” said His Majesty; “if they are in fault they will apologize, I know. What is the matter, Mana?”

The two boys stood up respectfully, moving a little away from Florence.

“We wanted to see the fish, Your Majesty,” said Mana gulping down his tears. “It was recess, and we thought we could run over and just look at it —”

“We could have got back to school in time,” said Vida. “Lulu saw us running and called out to stop. We would have stopped, Your Majesty, only we were in a hurry. So we ran and she ran after us. We were bound to see the fish.”

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Florence and the King exchanged a glance. His Majesty tugged at his moustache and tears of suppressed laughter stood in his eyes.

“She slapped Mana,” said Vida. “But she couldn’t catch me.”

“I won’t be slapped any more!” cried Mana defiantly. “I won’t, I won’t, and I won’t play doll, and I won’t do crochet, and I won’t sew on patch-work!”

“Why, that is girl’s work,” said the King surprised.

Lulu spoke up courageously. “It keeps them out of mischief, Your Majesty. If they had their own way they would be running over the flower beds and hurting themselves playing circus, and cutting their hands with tools, and getting their clothes dirty —”

“My dear,” said the King, “you mean well, no doubt, but you must let boys be boys. Let them get their clothes dirty — or wear them into rags if they like, but they must play boys’ games.”

“And go barefoot, Your Majesty,” suggested Mana; making the most of the occasion.

“Naturally,” said the King. “All children go barefooted, and it is the healthiest thing they can do.”

“And swim at Kapena Falls?” Mana went on daringly.

“Aren’t you allowed to go there? You are not true Hawaiians if you can’t swim.”

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"They won't stay in the pond," Lulu explained; "they want to jump off the cliff and it's too high."

"All the other boys do," said Vida.

"What others can do, Lulu, they should be allowed to do. Why," the King turned to Florence, "she is making molly-coddles out of them."

"They are too manly for that, but she can make them very unhappy."

"At the end of the month," said the King, "I intend to send the boys to a boarding school at the Bishop's. The new term will begin then."

"I have an awful time every morning to make them go to school," said Lulu.

The King looked at them all thoughtfully for a moment, as his eyes travelled from the tearful little spitfire in the doorway to the two boys clinging to Florence's skirts, and came to a decision.

"Miss Van Voorhis," he said, "I am afraid the fish will be too difficult for you" — he did not trust himself to glance at the drawing — "but would you mind changing your occupation, and giving the Princes a little instruction here at home? I don't mean to wear yourself out teaching, but just keep them from going behind in their studies, so that they can enter the Bishop's school on a level with other boys of their class?"

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“I’d love to do it!” cried Florence, “and oh, I forgot to tell you, my draft came all right this morning — it — it had been wrongly addressed, and I don’t want any salary, Your Majesty, though I’m grateful to you all the same. I’ll teach the boys with pleasure. I’m sure I can teach better than I can draw — much better.”

“I shall be deeply indebted to you, Miss Van Voorhis.”

“I only beg one thing of Your Majesty,” said Florence. “Please forget about the fish!”

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Lessons

IT was the day of the great Palace Ball and a pleasant atmosphere of excitement pervaded the Ross household. In the little sewing-room that opened out upon the banana plantation, Emma was busily tacking fresh flounces on a china silk ball-dress; the gowns she wore oftenest and the ones that needed constant repairs were those she danced in. Her aunt had one magnificent white velvet *holaku* embroidered in seed pearls which was reserved for state occasions. It had been brought out of the camphor-wood chest where it reposed in wrappers of tissue paper, and laid out upon a sheet, while Mrs. Ross went over it to fasten on the pearls or add new ones.

The relations between the Princes and the deposed tyrant were somewhat strained since the King's visit. The little girl had been deeply aggrieved at the unexpected interference with her authority, but she still clung to the unshaken conviction that she was right. She

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had brought up the Princes according to a theory and she had absolute faith in her own judgment. To do Lulu justice she did not sulk. Her tempers were soon over and she never bore malice. When she slapped her charges it was for their own good, and she only lost her temper when they refused to see the wisdom of her actions or tried to evade her law.

Vida and Mana were torn between joy at their deliverance and the nervous consciousness of being under the ban of Lulu's displeasure. Ever since they could remember the little blue-eyed tyrant had ruled them; they could not realize their freedom, and wore a furtive expression in her presence. Though Vida was the larger and stronger of the two boys, he had not the spirit of Mana and showed signs of weakening; at a word from Lulu he would have sat himself down to patch-work from sheer force of habit. But the mild, poetical Mana had a new light of defiance in his eye. He had danced the *Carmagnole*; he had declared his independence and was prepared to defend his rights. It was he who insisted that they should start the day by going barefoot.

Lulu's pale eyes took in the signs of revolt, but she held her head up proudly.

"If any one calls," she said in her usual tone of authority, "mind you put your shoes and stockings on. I

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don't like Missionary manners. It would mortify me if you were seen like that."

"All right, we will," said Vida obediently.

"I think you might string some of the blue and red beads," she added, taking advantage of his meekness.

"No, we cannot," said Mana valiantly, "we're going to play with the soldiers His Majesty gave us."

Vida waited to see the heavens fall, but she only said, "Well, don't jump on the flower beds anyway," and started off for school.

Florence had spent the morning writing letters for the mail which was to leave the following day. Now that her stay in Honolulu was assured for some months to come, the events of her broken engagement seemed less embarrassing to mention and she filled pages to her father, her Aunt, and several school friends, touching lightly on her changed plans, but telling much of her new life and surroundings.

The blood-stone ring lay very heavy on Florence's conscience, for she had missed Captain Leigh-Garret's two calls since the surf-riding and had as yet no opportunity of returning it to him. However, she laid it carefully away, intending to wear it to the ball and hand it to him with the intimation that their acquaintance must cease. She did not wish to get into any further entanglement with that bold, young man.

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She had heard no word from Max, but after lunch when she and the Princes had settled themselves under the tamarind tree to study, she was not surprised to see him coming up the gravel path.

“We are very busy,” she said, as he came over to where they were sitting and shook hands. “We are studying.”

Max threw himself on the grass beside them. “I’m a very good teacher,” he said. “Please let me stay. I won’t interrupt at all and I may be a great help. I have a fund of information on every known subject that is perfectly amazing.”

“We are really serious,” she protested.

“So am I,” said Max, gravely settling himself comfortably, his head on his hand. “What’s the first lesson?”

“Reading!” cried both boys at once. “We always begin with reading at school.”

“Then we will go on with the lesson you were to have had to-day,” said Florence.

Vida opened the book, found the place and read in a loud, flat, expressionless voice:

*“Mary Cary’s two canaries
Sing and chirp to her.
Pussy cat, do you hear that?
Pussy says, ‘purr, purr.’”*

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He handed it on to his brother who continued in the same key:

*“Gone are Mary’s two canaries,
Killed and eaten, too.
Pussy cat, did you do that?
Pussy says, ‘mew, mew.’”*

“Is that all the lesson?” asked Florence.

“Yes,” they both answered.

Florence looked at Max. “Isn’t that silly stuff to give intelligent children to read!” she exclaimed. “Here, give me the book.” She turned over the leaves, scornfully reading a few extracts here and there. “‘Alice, May, Joe and Susie took a walk in the woods. Alice and May found some pretty red blossoms.’ ‘I have a kitten, it’s name is Sharp.’ ‘Fred has a puppy, it’s name is Snap.’”

“I have a friend and her name is Florence,” said Christopher, laughing. “I have a steam launch and it’s name is Tut-Tut. I have a valet and his name is Abdul — I have a plantation —”

“I’ll send you home pretty soon if you don’t behave,” said the young school-mistress severely.

“There are some questions the teacher asks,” remarked Vida.

She read them out. “‘Did May find some pretty red blossoms?’ ‘What is your kitten’s name?’ ‘What name did Fred give his puppy?’”

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“It’s not very interesting,” said Vida as Florence threw the book down in disgust.

Mana laughed roguishly. “Did Mama Ross eat the fish? Did the fish look like Princess Ruth?”

“You see how you are demoralizing my school!” said Florence, as the two boys rolled on the grass in delight at their joke.

“Why not get some real story like ‘Robinson Crusoe’ or ‘The Arabian Nights,’” said Max. “Something that has spirit in it?”

“I have an old copy of ‘The Swiss Family Robinson,’” said Florence. “Vida, will you go and get it? It’s the one with the ragged blue cover on my shelf.”

When he had brought it she handed the book to Mana. “Now,” she said, “read till I say stop.”

He began. “Six days the storm raged with unbridled fury. On the seventh, far from showing any signs of abatement it seemed to increase in violence.” He made heavy weather with the long words but ploughed valiantly on, spurred by the interest of the first sentence; Vida pricked up his ears. “We were driven towards the south-east and no one knew in what region we should find ourselves; the ship, all of whose masts had gone by the board, leaked heavily; her crew, spent with so many weary days and sleepless nights, no longer addressed themselves to a toil which they considered

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useless; instead of the usual oaths or noisy songs only tardy ejaculations of devotion might now be heard; in a word, the alarm, the terror was general, and while recommending their souls to God's mercy, everybody thought only how they might save their own lives.' ”

“ *Aue!* ” cried Vida. “ Isn't that lovely! ” and took the next paragraph. Max insisted upon reading one too, which he did with great seriousness and expression. When the sailors had deserted the ship and the Robinson family had made themselves life preservers of old casks and boxes, Florence called a halt for spelling, which was a sudden drop from the intense interest of the story. But Christopher suggested that the Princes choose six hard words for each other and that Florence should pick out the same number for himself, and as he misspelled them and had to be corrected, the lesson had all the glamour of a game.

Australia was the subject chosen for geography. They laid the book open and copied the map in pebbles on the grass. While the Princes were doing this Florence racked her brains for any scraps of knowledge she had ever gleaned of the land of the eucalyptus and kangaroo.

“ It is hot in Australia in December and cold in May, ” she said. “ The rivers run away from the sea instead of towards it, and there are miles and miles of grazing country. ”

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“And rabbits,” said Vida unexpectedly.

“They are as bad as the minah birds here,” said Mana. “Since somebody brought those nasty black cheeky things here all the beautiful island birds have disappeared.”

“It’s the same with flowers,” said Max. “You know the *lantanna*? It was brought here in a pot to grow in a missionary’s window and it spread and spread till it has ruined acres of my coffee land. It grows as high as a man, and solid like a brick wall.”

“Old Kuliana,” said Vida, “one of my Aunt’s servants, says the minah bird and the *lantanna* are like the white people, and bye-and-bye they will crowd the islands till there won’t be any natives left.”

The conversation was hastily brought back to Australia. Max gave a thrilling account of a convict ship going out to Botany Bay; and told them of the beautiful city of Sydney with its stone quays and gardens on the edge of the water; and described the land-locked harbour, the most beautiful in the world.

“I’d love to see it,” said Florence. “I never thought much of foreign lands when I was at home, but coming to Honolulu has given me a taste for travel and now I want to see more strange countries.”

Max looked unusually handsome as he lay on the grass in his white flannels; he had thrown his straw hat

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on a branch of the tree and a shaft of sunlight touched his hair, thick and slightly ruffled, of an even shade of grey. There was a definite purpose in the eyes that looked up at her so steadily from under the straight black brows, and a glow of suppressed feeling warmed the ruddy sunburn of his cheek. "You have only to give the word," he said.

"Have you a magic carpet?" asked Mana.

"I don't know yet," said Max. "It all depends on the word of a beautiful Princess."

"Perhaps he means Flossie," said Vida. "She's only a match-girl."

"She's a school-teacher," said Florence, "and our next lesson is arithmetic."

While the boys lay prone on the grass working busily at their sums, the young girl told Max of her experiences as an artist, of the safe arrival of her draft, and described the visit of the King and how she came to undertake the rôle of governess. It was a confidential talk, hardly above a whisper, for they were careful not to disturb the young students; she told her story gaily, in little disconnected sentences, and Max laughed softly as he listened, looking up at her half averted face; any one could have heard the words, but there was a tone in both their voices, an unconscious tenderness and warmth, that would have betrayed them at once as lovers.

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“I wanted to see you alone to-day,” he murmured. “I have something to tell you, and to-night at the ball I know you’ll be so much in request I won’t have a ghost of a chance.”

“I’ll try to remember to keep a dance for you. Shall I make a note of it? ‘Jot down a *memo*,’ as Lulu says?”

“Just tell me one thing honestly. I never did believe a word of Honolulu gossip, but you don’t care a rap for Captain Leigh-Garrett, do you?”

“Three thousand five hundred and sixty-three dollars and thirty cents!” shouted Vida, throwing down his pencil.

“No, no,” cried Mana, “it’s hogsheads not dollars!”

“Tell me,” said Max, sitting up to take the slates.

Some latent instinct of feminine coquetry prompted Florence to say decidedly, “I like him very much, indeed!”

Max smiled imperturbably. “I don’t believe a word of it,” he said. “He isn’t your kind at all.”

Bella came across the grass from the cook-house bearing a tea-tray, followed by Mrs. Ross and Emma from the sewing-room. Lulu in a clean starched pinafore, her ashen hair smoothly braided into two tight little pig-tails, sat down primly beside Max, and began sorting buttons for a long string she was collecting. The Princes slipped off to the summer-house and were soon busy

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with hammer and saw converting it into a theatre. Several times the little girl hinted that they were making too great a noise and would be better employed sewing on a doll's quilt or helping her string buttons, but Max's presence and the memory of the King's remarks restrained her.

"I saw some bustles in town the other day," said Mrs. Ross plaintively, serving the tea. "I do hope they aren't the fashion again. Every time the *Suez* comes in you see some new and silly change."

"There were six boxes from Paris on the steamer this time," said Lulu, "for the Ah Sue girls. They're sure to be ball dresses and I suppose they'll wear 'em to-night. Mind you tell me what they are like."

"The Russians are to take the lead to-night," said Max, "for this dance is given in honour of the *Raz-boinik*. Do you know who the Russian Consul is?"

"Mr. Lawson!" cried Lulu. "Haven't you been to see them yet?"

"Fortunately I made a dinner call there last week."

"You'd better be looking up the Japanese Commission," said Lulu.

"Why?" asked Emma and Mrs. Ross, both deeply interested.

"Count Tatsu told me there was a Japanese war-ship on her way here. They got the news by the *Suez*."

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“There!” cried Mrs. Ross, “I meant to have called at the Commissioner’s yesterday. We’ll go to-morrow, though I hate to follow the crowd.”

“Then why go?” asked Florence; “I don’t understand.”

“When the ship gets here,” said Mrs. Ross, “the Japanese Commissioner will give balls and entertainments in honour of the officers, and if you haven’t called you won’t be asked. There will be a perfect rush now.”

“If I were they,” said Florence laughing, “I would not invite the people who only came after they heard the news.”

“They are obliged to,” said Mrs. Ross. “It is official.”

“We have as many consuls and commissioners here as there are nations under the sun,” said Max. “One of my clerks in the bank is Consul for Mexico, and he’s a Down East Yankee.”

“I know, when we heard the *Vanadis* was coming, with Prince Oscar on board,” said Mrs. Ross, “there was a great commotion to find out who the Swedish Consul was. He and his wife were very quiet people who did not go out much. They must have been surprised when all Honolulu streamed in at their gate.”

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"They entertained beautifully when the ship did come in," said Emma. "With a *lanai* for dancing and a band stand in the garden."

"Like the one at the Russian Consulate now," added Lulu.

Mrs. Ross laughed. "When you hear that a foreign ship is expected, it is strange to see the little nobodies who suddenly bloom into bowers and band-stands and gilt-edged invitation cards."

"If I were you," said Lulu sagely, "I'd go and call whenever I saw a *lanai* going up in anybody's garden."

The little girl was restless and unhappy. She missed the companionship of the Princes and her eyes turned more than once in the direction of the summer-house. Finally the sound of hammering was interrupted by ecstatic shrieks of delight that drew her irresistibly to the spot. She walked slowly, assuming her usual air of disdain, but listened attentively when Vida explained that they were making a stage.

"We are going to give a performance and do our circus tricks," said Mana with a very independent air.

"You ought to have a curtain," suggested Lulu.

"We'll hang up a sheet."

"That won't be nice at all. There's a lot of cretonne up in the garret. If you like I'll get it and sew a curtain for you."

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“Thank you,” said Vida politely.

“I wouldn’t do circus if I were you,” said Lulu. “I’ll tell you what!” she went on, assuming charge of the whole affair, “we’ll play ‘Bluebeard!’ I’ll be Fatima, and Vida can be Bluebeard and Mana will be the brother that comes to the rescue!”

“That will be nice,” said Mana doubtfully.

“Oh, it will be splendid!” cried Lulu. “I know how to make the heads of the murdered wives! You cut holes in a sheet and get people to stick their heads through and you can hang their hair up to make-believe nails and sew stripes of red flannel for blood. It looks awful!”

This gory picture won the boys, heart and soul, and soon all three were busily at work over the theatre on the best possible terms.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Palace Ball

ALL the carriages in Honolulu seemed to be going in the direction of the palace. Every form of equipage, from the British Commissioner's fine barouche with coachman and footmen in livery, to the omnibus chartered by the bachelors from up the Valley. Crowds on foot wended their way in the same direction; girls in fluffy gowns with bits of lace thrown over their heads, young men in evening dress, without overcoats, mingled with the streams of natives who crowded about the gates to watch the arriving guests.

The great building, with its wide stone colonnades sparkled like a jewel against the dark background of the night. The facade was decorated with bunting and evergreen; windows glittered with light, and through the noble entrance, draped with velvet hangings, a dazzling illumination poured down upon the stairway.

Florence looked out upon the scene with great interest. She had been but once before to the palace, and

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then only on a quiet morning and had no idea of its magnificence. The King, whom she had come to know informally and was beginning to regard as a friend, seemed to grow suddenly remote surrounded by this splendour; the footmen, in scarlet plush, silk stockings and powdered hair, who stood in rows on the steps; the arriving guests in their trailing ball dresses; the groups of equerries in uniform, all added to her feeling of awe.

Mrs. Ross's white velvet made a grand showing as she swept up the stairs between the rows of footmen on the arm of an *aide-de-camp* who had run down to meet her.

Florence found Captain Leigh-Garrett waiting for her as they came out of the crowded dressing-room into the grand hall. She was prepared to meet the young man coldly and formally, but amid the unusual surroundings, the music and lights and the excitement of her first grand ball, she found herself smiling very amiably upon the tall young Englishman in the fine uniform.

"Please be generous to-night," he said. "Don't throw over old friends for new ones."

"You are neither," she answered, looking up at him with a smiling glance that took the sting out of the words.

"I am a friend, and a good one, as you'll find out," he said earnestly. "Don't give away all your dances. I

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have to stay here to look after the crush and I won't be on hand to claim my share, so save me three dances, please."

"It's time to go in," said Mrs. Ross, touching Florence with her fan.

"Oh, Captain," said the young girl over her shoulder to Dick, "I forgot to tell you, I've brought your ring!"

He nodded as he went off to receive a group of new arrivals. A crowd of people were waiting at the throne-room door, a couple of *aides-de-camp* arranging the order of their entrance. Emma stooped, gave a final touch to her aunt's train, and then, waiting a few minutes to give the preceding party time, they received the signal, and Mrs. Ross entered the room followed by the two girls. At the further end of a noble and stately hall were two gilt chairs on a platform, overhung with a canopy of red velvet edged with ermine and surmounted by a golden crown. At the steps of the throne the royal family stood in a row to receive the guests: the King and Queen, Princess Liliuokalani and Princess Likelike, their brilliant costumes reflected in the waxed surface of the floor. The first comers, who had already made their bow, stood along the sides of the room or gathered in groups at the open French windows, watching the scene with the greatest interest.

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The length of that hall was a long walk to take before the eyes of so many spectators, but Florence kept a little behind Mrs. Ross and was sustained by that lady's self-possession.

The Chamberlain announced their names in a low voice; Mrs. Ross slowly and impressively sank almost to her knees before the King; Emma followed, and when it came to Florence's turn she could hardly believe that the magnificent monarch in scarlet and gold, sword and sash, his broad breast sparkling with diamond orders was the same kindly gentleman she had met before. As she rose trembling from her deep curtsy she caught a brief friendly smile from His Majesty and then, following the example of Mrs. Ross and Emma, she bowed to the Queen, to Princess Liliuokalani, and Princess Likelike.

It was with almost a gasp of relief that she turned to join the others and watch the new arrivals. She found herself near Lieutenant Todd who was evidently waiting for her. He was a new surprise. In his uniform on board the *Mohawk*, he looked rather well, but in the full dress of the United States Navy he was imposing.

"I feel like a ship that has just come into harbour after a storm," she whispered to him. "That was a terrible ordeal! See how my hands are trembling!"

"We always come early," said Lieutenant Danby, one of a little group of glittering *Mohawks*. "I wouldn't

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miss this show for anything. You should have seen the entrance of the *Razboiniks* — they came in a body — and Solomon in all his glory could not hold a candle to 'em. There are some new comers — tourists — I'm waiting for them. It's great fun to see their bows to royalty."

"I always suffer too much for other people," said Florence. "Here come the Bonner girls."

"You needn't waste any suffering on them," said Lieutenant Danby. "They could give us all points on self-possession."

As the two girls sailed down the hall with a manly swagger that swirled their trains from side to side, there were whispered remarks on their appearance, flattering and otherwise.

"Weren't you frightened?" Florence asked, as the Bonner girls joined the group.

"Not a bit!" said Polly. "I love it. Don't you remember, Betty, when we made our bow three times at the King's birthday reception? We ran around and joined the tail of the procession until Curtis made us stop. It was great fun. The King received us each time as though he had never seen us before."

Numbers of guests were now arriving. Native ladies in silk and velvet *holakus*, with head-dresses of pearls and ostrich plumes; pretty girls ranging in colour from ma-

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hogany brown and *café-au-lait* to the fairest pink and white; members of the Japanese Commission, in correct evening dress, missionaries, consuls, naval officers of Germany, England and the United States in full uniform entered in small groups or singly, walking the length of the hall and making their bows to royalty under the gaze of those who had arrived before them; all more or less conscious of the scrutiny and whispered comments.

“Look! Look!” said Betty Bonner, “here come some strangers!”

A stout, bald gentleman, very red and nervous looking, was walking up the hall with his wife, a frail hatchet-faced lady, who clung convulsively to his arm. They attempted to bow to the Chamberlain, but Curtis deftly faced them toward the King. Still arm-in-arm they bobbed to the Queen, and to the Princess Liliuokalani, and then, with a sudden beaming look of relief, they turned and backed into the Princess Likelike, not knowing that she belonged to the royal semicircle.

“Look at the Ah Sue girls,” whispered Mrs. Ross. “Try to remember the dresses for Lulu.”

All the women studied the new arrivals attentively as they trailed in with that languid assurance that only perfectly fitting Paris gowns can give. There were three extremely pretty girls, followed by their father, a Chi-

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nese mandarin in silk Oriental clothes, shaved head and long queue. After him came his son familiarly called Billy Ah Sue, a Yale man, in faultless evening dress, his straight hair parted down the middle.

"They certainly are lovely creatures," said Florence, referring to the girls.

"And we'll be having them at our balls for the next ten years to come," said Mrs. Ross, "for there are a lot more in the nursery, or I should say under the banyan tree, for that's where you always see the baby Ah Sues."

Captain Leigh-Garrett had worked his way round behind the throne and in and out among the crowd, to where Florence was standing.

"I'm deserting my post for your sake," he whispered, "and I'm just in time!" he added, "to see Sally make her grand entrance. You can trust her for coming late."

All eyes turned towards the door where Mrs. Landry appeared in a rose-coloured gown with a diamond tiara on her yellow hair. Florence took her in with a glance of admiration that changed somewhat as she recognized the man who followed as Christopher Maxwell. They were a handsome couple and a buzz of comment followed their progress up the hall.

"She'll capture him yet," whispered Dick.

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Just behind them a voice murmured: "Wealth and beauty make a good combination," and then, very distinctly came the reply in feminine accents: "They say the engagement is to be announced this evening."

Florence suddenly realized that she had taken Max very seriously, against the widow's advice. She had been warned not to believe in idle compliments and what else had he offered her? Only agreeable nothings when they were alone together, but in public he was always to be found by Mrs. Landry's side. She remembered how she had seen them together on the *Mohawk*.

"Don't forget that you've given me the first dance," said Dick.

"As many as you like," was the unexpected reply.

"And a polka?"

"Yes."

"And the supper dance?"

"The supper dance is mine," said the resolute voice of Christopher Maxwell, who had come up behind them.

"And you promised me the first waltz, Miss Van Voorhis."

She raised her eyes to his coldly. "I'm engaged to Captain Leigh-Garrett for that," she said.

He looked surprised at her tone and slightly puzzled. "But not the supper dance," he said.

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“As you like,” she answered over her shoulder, and turned to Dick. The music had begun. “Isn’t this ours?” she asked.

“No, this is the royal quadrille, it’s too good for the likes of us. We all have to stand up respectfully and look on.”

Florence had been cheered by Max’s determined attitude, but the words she had overheard rankled in her heart. A spirit of pride upheld her, and her one idea was to prevent his seeing that she cared in any way. After one quick glance at Captain Leigh-Garrett, Maxwell stepped back; he looked hurt, and though he listened deferentially to Mrs. Ross, his eyes were fixed upon Florence who still stood by Dick’s side.

The royal quadrille was forming in the middle of the floor. The King, with the Russian Consul’s wife, faced the Captain of the *Razboinik*, whose partner was a little Japanese lady in mauve satin.

“That is the Commissioner’s wife,” whispered Dick, “she’s coming to the front just now because a Japanese ship is expected in.”

The Premier, an elderly, hook-nosed personage, who looked like Cardinal Richelieu, danced with the pretty and gay little Princess Likelike, leaving the Russian Consul, a small lean man, and a massive lady of rank to complete the set.

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“This is the first appearance of the Premier on the dancing floor,” whispered Dick to Florence.

“The Consul’s wife looks fearfully nervous,” she answered. “It must be awful to dance with all of us looking on and making remarks.”

The band played the opening bars of the “Likelike Quadrille.” Everybody bowed. That was quite satisfactory. The first four should cross over but the Consul’s wife, clutching the King’s hand, marched resolutely forward and backward. His Majesty, who knew the figures of the quadrille perfectly, was too polite to resist, and allowed himself to be led with imperturbable dignity. The Japanese lady, throwing her mauve train over her arm, took the most extraordinary little bird-like hops with a countenance of unmoved serenity. The Russian Captain, a tall man with fiery red whiskers and superabundant vitality, dashed forth to cross over, when, seeing the manœuvres of the opposite couple, he did the same, his little partner following in hops. Several *aides* skirted about, like referees at a prize-fight, skipping and gesticulating and very evidently whispering instructions.

Florence stood looking on, slowly waving her fan, to all outward appearance unmoved; but the scene was only a blur of colour before her eyes. She remembered the quick glance Max had given Dick, the surprise and

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reproach in his voice; she was angry, proud, a little frightened, and felt a sudden elation of reckless high spirits.

The sides started. Princess Likelike and the native lady sallied forth at the first note of the music, doing the figure correctly themselves but entirely deserting their partners. The old Premier bowed in all directions, visibly bewildered by the buzzing *aides*, while the little Consul executed a *pas seul*.

The royal quadrille was always cut to four figures, and then, without any preamble or flourish, the music flowed into the cadence of "My Love for You, O Ikino."

Dick and Florence made one circuit of the room, but he was an awkward dancer and his partner impatiently suggested that they go out on the terrace and see the electric lights in the garden.

The young girl perched on the wide balustrade while Dick leaned against a stone pillar. He was serious and there was a note of agitation in his voice as he said: "You've treated me very shabbily, Miss Van Voorhis, and I haven't done a thing to deserve it."

"I've treated you beautifully," she replied. "I meant to have given you a lecture, and I'd made up my mind never to see you again under any circumstances if I could avoid it, and here I've allowed myself to be

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pushed and jostled and trampled on when I might have chosen a partner who could dance.”

“Now you’re guying me, but you know what I mean. You wouldn’t even look at me Saturday night or go in the same boat with me at the surf-riding.”

“How could I choose?” she said. “I had to take what was given me and Mr. Maxwell —”

“Max had a quarrel with Sally that night, just one of their tiffs, and you thought he was devoted to you. She told me herself she’d refused to go into the *luau* with him and that was why he asked you. Didn’t you notice that they weren’t on speaking terms?”

The young girl did not answer. It was true, she thought quickly; Max had not exchanged a word with the widow that evening and Dick was nearer right than he was aware of, for she had thought that — that —

“You don’t know your real friends,” Dick went on reproachfully; “you should have seen through such a transparent thing as that, and you ought to know me better. I thought you could read me like a book.”

“Oh,” she answered nervously, “I don’t look below the surface. If people are nice on the outside I think they are good all the way through. I judge character by eyelashes.”

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“Don’t misjudge me,” he said, taking her remarks all to himself; “I’m no account I know, if my eyelashes are long, but I’m a better man since I met you.”

Florence laughed mockingly. “I never suspected you of goodness, or noticed your eyelashes. The best man I know hasn’t any. How is a girl to know? I would have thought that a noble face was the index of a noble mind, but —” She interrupted herself. “What nonsense I am talking! I want to give you back your ring, Captain.” She drew off her glove. “I told you I had a nice little sermon all prepared for you but I’ve forgotten what I wanted to say.”

“I’ll listen to your sermons and learn them by heart,” he said, “if you’ll only care —”

“Here comes Lieutenant Todd,” she returned, “I’m engaged to him for this dance, so take your ring back.”

“Please wear it,” said Dick.

The young man put his hands behind his back and looked down at her; Florence hesitated for a moment, and then nodded a little recklessly as she pulled on her glove and walked off on Hammy’s arm. The young lieutenant was bewildered by her gaiety and sparkle. She teased him and laughed at him in a manner utterly unlike herself, and finally, when they were resting after a wild, swirling waltz that Hammy danced to perfection, she insisted on seeing his card. “There are such a lot of

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pretty girls here to-night," she said, "that I'm sure it's filled to the brim."

"I have only one name."

She looked up, a little sobered by his sad tone.

"Oh, please, Mr. Todd, don't be foolish. It is a lovely floor and perfect music and you are too good a dancer to be wasted."

"I'd rather stand in a corner and watch you than dance with any one else."

"You will make me unhappy if you do that."

He handed her the card. "Very well," he said meekly, "pick out some partners for me and I'll dance with them."

"That's a good boy. Now I'll write you a list very lightly in pencil so you can rub it out or change the name of the lady. I put down Mrs. Landry, and Emma, and one of the beautiful Coney girls, and let me see — oh, the Ah Sues. They are all pretty and you can take your choice."

"It's contrariwise there," said Hammy; "I'll endeavour to see which one will accept me; they are in great demand."

"Then there are the Bonner girls."

"That is sufficient and over. I don't feel like dancing."

"You must," said Florence; "remember this isn't Paita, Peru; it is glorious, delightful Honolulu!"

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Her next dance was with Billy Ah Sue, a Centennial Lancers with eight couples. They were already old friends and had much to say to each other. Florence was still wildly gay and they talked with such animation between the figures of the lancers that they had to be called several times by the rest of the set.

Her partners were strangely cosmopolitan. A slim black-eyed Count, *attaché* to the French Legation; a respectful German officer who called her "*gnadica fraulein*" and clicked his heels when he bowed; several Englishmen; a tall thin Russian who, catching her about the waist, spun furiously like a top until they were both breathless. It was very gay; there was ample space for every one to dance without any crowding; rich trains swept the floor; lights sparkled on the handsome gowns and splendid uniforms, and the music was varied occasionally by the band boys laying aside their instruments and singing a waltz in a rich Hawaiian chorus.

The supper dance was a lancers, and it happened that she was talking to Captain Leigh-Garrett when Max came to claim her. For a moment she was a little frightened at the sight of his grave face, but she plucked up spirit, and gave Dick a radiant smile as she parted from him and talked fast and gaily.

"Did you see my little midshipman?" she said, as they took their places *vis-a-vis* to Princess Likelike and

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Count Tatsu. "He asked for the after-supper extra, and he invited me to visit the *Stupendous*. He says they have a 'jolly mess in the gun-room,' whatever that means, and promised me a 'bang up tea.'"

She found it a little difficult to keep up her nervous prattle to so unresponsive a partner, but she refused to notice the strange questioning look in Max's eyes, and went on talking.

She was looking bewilderingly pretty, with a bright flush on her cheeks, and though she tried hard to conceal it, the little flicker that Max had grown to know so well came and went across her face.

The first formality of the ball was wearing off. The music seemed livelier; the dancers laughed and talked as they swung through the figures of the lancers, while many of them joined in singing the words of the well known Hawaiian melodies.

The Princess Likelike, when she touched hands with Florence, nodded and smiled with much friendliness; Count Tatsu whispered a compliment as they met in the whirl of the dance.

For the last figure, the Grand Chain, the band played a *hulahula* so wild and inspiring that the whole company took up the refrain:

*"He inoa keia no Paahana,
Ke iki mahine noho kua hi wi."*

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As they trooped off singing into the supper-room Maxwell led his partner to a snug little seat in the embrasure of a window where they were entirely hidden from view by the folds of a velvet curtain. A red-coated serving man brought them a small table just large enough to hold their plates and glasses of champagne.

Florence made an elaborate pretence of eating by nibbling the edge of a *pate-de-foi-gras* sandwich cut into the shape of a heart.

"This is what I have been looking forward to," said Max.

"Isn't it wonderful?" said Florence. "I never dreamed the palace was so fine. I wish I could see a grand state dinner in this room, it must be tremendously impressive. Mrs. Ross says Prince Lunalilo's portrait is here, but I declare that row of paintings make the ancient Hawaiians look as though they were made out of leather and stuffed."

Her partner had leaned forward and was looking at her steadily. "What is it?" he said. "What has happened to change everything?"

"Why, nothing that I know of," she said, opening her eyes and giving a very good imitation of surprise.

"I have been looking forward to this ball like a school-boy to the holidays."

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Florence's anger had melted at the first tones of his voice. She could not meet his eyes, but she felt his presence close to her, and her heart throbbed. Then she remembered Dick's words, and drew a long breath.

"I looked forward to it too," she said perversely, "and I've enjoyed it immensely. Everybody I met invited me somewhere. I'm going to a *luau* at the Princess Like-like's, and a theatrical entertainment on the German ship, and the first officer of the *Razboinik* wants to teach me the Russian polonaise for the ball they are giving at the Opera House, and Mrs. Tyler asked me to take part in tableaux for the church bazaar —"

"Florence," said Max appealingly, "you are not talking like yourself. What is wrong? Why have you changed since yesterday?"

"Yesterday was a long time ago," she faltered.

"Look at me," he said, but she would not raise her eyes, though the slight tremble of her lips betrayed her agitation. "We were so happy together under the tamarind trees teaching the little Princes," he went on. "We were made out of the same clay yesterday."

"You were different then," she said, with a little break in her voice.

"My dearest girl, I've never changed from the first moment I saw you. I loved you then —" Her hand was lying over the arm of the chair; Max lifted it to his lips,

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and suddenly started back at the sight of the heavy blood-stone ring. He recognized it at once. Florence raised her eyes and met a swift, searching, bitter look and knew, in that moment, that she had wounded him to the heart.

"I beg your pardon," he said gravely, dropping her hand that fell limply on the velvet, "I did not know."

She could not speak. It seemed as though her heart had suddenly stopped beating. She looked up at him beseechingly, but his face was pale and set and turned from her. He rose, smiling coldly.

"Shall we go back to the throne-room?" he said. "They are beginning to dance."

She felt like one caught in a net. She tried to speak, to make some explanation; but the words died in her throat. The barrier of reserve he put between them made it impossible.

The youthful officer of the gun-room, who came gaily to claim his after-supper extra, was disappointed in Florence. He had thought her so charming; she seemed interested in him and had taken his remarks seriously, as though he were grown up; now he found her cold and preoccupied.

Her next partner was Major Kunikikua of the Hawaiian Army. She had accepted him for a quadrille with interest, but in her present state of mind this broad

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stolid officer's laboured remarks in English were difficult to understand and the conversation flagged. Fortunately he possessed that serene repose of manner peculiarly Polynesian, and when his partner could not find a word for him during the intervals between the figures and as they walked out on the colonnade after the dance, he filled up the pauses by singing softly to himself in Hawaiian.

The Missionaries, the Ministers, Commissioners and their families, the more serious members of the community, left early after supper. Max had disappeared. Mrs. Ross signalled to Florence that it was time to go.

"Don't leave yet," cried one of the Bonner girls who was passing on the arm of a be-whiskered Russian; "the ball only begins when all the old fogies have left. The King never dances till then, and when he comes off his perch we'll have a lovely time."

Florence made her adieux to the Princess Liliuokalani, for the Queen had retired early, and was crossing the hall when she met Captain Leigh-Garrett hastening towards her. He was looking flushed and confident.

"I knew you'd wait for me," he said cheerfully; "I was just having a cigar with Rex to fill up the time till the Missionaries left. Now we'll have the place to ourselves."

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“Captain Leigh-Garrett,” said Florence, drawing off the ring, “take this back at once. I was wrong to wear it even for a moment.”

The young man hesitated, but after one look at her face he slipped it on his finger.

“I’ll get you a diamond,” he said, “or would you like a black pearl? I have a ripping big stud the size of a bullet. Looks like one too, you couldn’t tell the difference with the naked eye.”

It was her own fault that he was so insufferably familiar, and yet every word he said added to her resentment against him. She hated Dick Leigh-Garrett not only for himself but woman-like, for her own weakness in encouraging him.

“I don’t want anything from you,” she said and turned to go.

“But here, wait!” said Dick. “Don’t be grumpy. I’ll give you my black pearl and I’ll have it set round with brilliants. It’ll look ripping on your white little hand.”

“I don’t want your ring!” said Florence passionately. “I don’t want anything to do with you; I hate you!” and ran out into the hall leaving the young man transfixed. He pulled the ends of his yellow moustache for a moment, looking after her in angry surprise, and then, turning, saw Mrs. Landry beckoning to him with her fan.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Aloha Oe

THE family did not get up till late on the morning after the ball. Florence felt too dispirited to teach the boys who flew off to devote every minute to the theatre.

While they were all at luncheon the telephone announced the arrival of the long overdue man-of-war *Adams*.

Lulu clapped her hands. "Oh, I'm so glad!" she said. "That poor Mrs. Worthing's husband has come at last!"

"Well, this *is* exciting," said Mrs. Ross, "to have the *Adams* come in on steamer day! We'll go down to see the *Suez* off, and then we'll hear all the news."

"I think I'd rather stay at home," said Florence.

"What are the girls coming to!" exclaimed Mrs. Ross. "When I was your age I could dance all night and ride all day; nothing ever tired me, and here you are look-

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ing half dead. But you must come with us to see the steamer off; it will do you good."

The young girl made her escape as soon as she could, leaving them all chattering excitedly, and went out under the old tamarind tree. Throwing herself down on the warm, dry grass she lay there thinking while she idly touched a tiny sprig of sensitive plant to see the leaves shiver and close.

She wished for a moment that she were going back on the *Suez* that afternoon; perhaps, if she found herself at sea homeward bound, she could forget the ache in her heart. And yet she knew that she would rather die than leave Honolulu. Max loved her. He had tried to tell her so, and she remembered the tones of his voice when he had called her by name. But now he must despise her for a shallow, heartless flirt. She must have been wrong about Mrs. Landry. He could not have spoken as he did if he had loved another woman. She sighed deeply. Her life seemed to be in a hopeless tangle. Seeing a carriage stop at the gate she lay very still lest it might be visitors and she was in no mood for small talk; but when she recognized Hamilton Todd she sat up and called out to him. He was the one who had remained unchanged and faithful; her only friend. He came across the lawn to where she was sitting, looking very pale and agitated as he flung himself on the grass beside her.

ALOHA OE

"I have come to say good-bye, Florence."

"Why," she cried, "your ship is not leaving, surely?"

"I have been transferred," he said, pulling up little tufts of grass with a trembling hand.

"Transferred to what?"

"To the *Adams*. She goes on to Peru."

"How perfectly awful! I am so sorry. How long will she stop there?"

"Three months. Panama Canal troubles."

"Oh, Hammy," she said anxiously, "you're not going to Paita, Peru?"

He nodded.

"Three months in a place you hate? Oh, how awful!"

"I don't hate Peru so much as all that," said Hammy.

"I was exaggerating somewhat."

"But you do, you have told me a thousand times you'd rather die than go back there for fifteen minutes. It is not — it is not any sort of punishment?"

The young man laughed nervously. "Oh, no," he said. "The *Adams* is the flag-ship and has brought the Admiral to this station. He has sanctioned the change. I asked to be transferred."

"You asked to be transferred?" Florence looked at him in bewilderment. Laying her hand on his coat-sleeve she gave it a little shake.

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“Will you please talk sense?” she said. “I don’t know what to make of anything you have said!”

“Oh, Florence!” cried the young man, catching her hand in both his. “I would not mind going so much if it were not for you. It breaks my heart to leave you!”

“But why are you going?”

“It was my duty,” said Hammy. “Mrs. Worthing’s husband is on the *Adams*, she has been waiting for him so long — and she would not survive the shock of another separation. We were expecting the *Adams* to remain in port for a considerable period but she proceeds at once to Paita, Peru. She coaled at Hilo and only put in here for mail.”

“Oh!” said Florence, slowly, a light shining in her eyes. “I begin to understand. You exchanged with her husband. He will stay on here in the *Mohawk*?”

Hammy nodded and began pulling up more roots.

“And you will exchange with him, and go to Paita, Peru? Hammy!” she cried in an awe-stricken voice, “how generous of you! How noble!”

The young man’s pale face flushed suddenly crimson.

“I know what a sacrifice you are making,” she went on enthusiastically. “It’s splendid of you and I’m proud to have you for my friend!”

“Thank you, Florence. I have dared to call you by your beautiful name, knowing it is for the last time.

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Whatever your name was, it would be beautiful to me for meaning you. Will you write to me sometimes? Not very frequently, of course, but even the Desert of Sahara would be habitable to me if I could look forward to receiving a line from you."

"Indeed I will," said Florence.

"You will say good-bye to the family for me, won't you?" he said awkwardly. "I can't trust myself to see anybody now, I must be leaving."

"So soon?" she cried, "surely you are not going at once?"

"I must. The express is waiting and the *Adams* is on the point of sailing. I did not allow myself much time, but I had to say farewell to you before I took my departure. Good-bye, Florence —" He lingered over her name, and then bending, kissed her hand, his eyes full of tears. "Don't rise," he said. "Let me leave you here in the old garden where you will always be enshrined on the tablets of my memory. There is one heart, Florence, that will prove faithful to you till it ceases to beat. Good-bye."

She watched his tall figure striding down the pathway. He jumped into the carriage, looking back as it turned to go down the street. A wave of his straw hat and he was gone.

Florence begged hard to stay at home but the family

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were all excitedly bent on seeing the steamer off and insisted upon her going. Lulu even brought out her hat so that she could join them at once as they all walked down. "Don't bother about your gloves," she said; "nobody wears them in the daytime."

When they reached the esplanade they found the place crowded. Great stacks of coal were disappearing under the rapid onslaughts of strong brown Hawaiians, who sang and laughed as they worked. Native girls were selling *leis* and the perfume of frangipanni, sweet-scented ginger flowers and *maile* mingled with the smell of sugar and bananas piled up for shipment. The decks of the steamer were already filled with people, their light-coloured dresses, bright parasols and wreaths of flowers, making a gay mingling of many colours. Some of the departing passengers were almost unrecognizable, they were so entwined and be-garlanded.

The Hawaiian band was playing with great spirit; the crowd formed into little groups and broke away, pushing good naturedly, and all talking and laughing in English and Hawaiian, while little naked boys dived for pieces of silver thrown from the ship's deck.

Florence saw many people she knew, and was stopped in her progress to the steamer a dozen times to speak to friends. There was Major Kunikikua who looked larger and wider than ever in his white flan-

ALOHA OE

nels with a yellow wreath around his hat. Billy Ah Sue and his sisters stopped her to talk about the ball; and the Bonner girls were enthusiastic over Hammy's departure.

"We made him some *leis*," said Polly. "And Betty sent him a box of cigars and a pail of *poi*."

"Where is the *Adams* now?" asked Florence.

"Outside the reef. You can see it from the bridge. It's just about leaving I think."

They all pushed forward towards the gangway, the Bonner girls still screaming in their high voices.

"You should have seen the row at the hotel this morning. It was simply awful. When Mrs. Worthing found her husband was not going to stay she shrieked and screamed and clung to him."

"We were all crying," said Betty, "and Lee simply bawled."

"Then Hammy came," said Polly, "and the Admiral, being in port, of course made the exchange easy. Lee offered Hammy a silver watch the size of a turnip."

They all struggled laughing and talking up the gangway, the overpowering perfume of flowers filling the air to the exclusion of everything else.

Florence edged away from the others and worked along to reach the companion ladder; as she climbed up to the bridge she found Mrs. Landry and Dick in posses-

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sion, leaning on the railing, overlooking the crowded wharf. The widow wore a smile of such radiance that Florence stopped involuntarily.

"You are looking very well," she said.

"My dear, everything is for the best in the best of possible worlds. Dick and I have made up, and we'll never, never misunderstand each other again."

"I didn't know you had quarrelled," said Florence.

"We didn't," said Dick. He looked sulkily defiant, with his hands rammed into his coat pockets. "It's only a case of '*quand on n'a pas ce qu'on aime, il faut aimer ce qu'on a!*'"

"I don't understand when you speak so fast," said the widow, "and I'm sure it's rude, but I don't care." Something flashed on her hand as she raised it a little ostentatiously to pat her yellow hair, and Florence recognized the blood-stone ring.

"There's the *Adams*," said Mrs. Landry, pointing far beyond the reef where a man-of-war was slowly steaming out and away.

The widow, clinging to Dick's hand, disappeared down the companionway, leaving the young girl alone. Florence knew well enough that Hammy was looking back at Honolulu from the deck of the departing ship. The tears were in her eyes as she gazed out to sea and waved her handkerchief, bidding farewell in her heart

ALOHA OE

to the generous lad who loved her. She watched until the tiny speck on the horizon grew smaller and smaller, leaving only a faint puff of smoke against the blue sky.

The bugle call, for all hands off the ship, woke Florence from a reverie and she climbed down to the main deck following the crowd ashore, and feeling more desolate and alone than ever in her life before. She walked up to the end of the wharf and stood beside a great pile, watching the scene like a person in a dream. The last rope was thrown loose; all along the deck of the ship a thin line of passengers, wreathed and garlanded, were waving handkerchiefs and small Hawaiian and American flags. The Captain stood on the bridge issuing orders in a loud voice. A last belated passenger, giving a daring leap, was hauled into a port-hole, amid enthusiastic applause. Many of the passengers were crying. There were several girls returning to school after a pleasant holiday at home. One entire family was leaving the islands forever, all drowned in tears and smothered in flowers. There were business men, tourists, island folk going up to the "coast" for a trip. On shore were many Americans who had lived half their lifetime in Hawaii but never failed to see the steamer off for "Home." The younger generation watched the passengers enviously who were going into the great outside world which the natives called

THE GIRL FROM HOME

vaguely "beyond the horizon" or the "cold country." As the heavily laden ship swung slowly out into the stream the band played that heart-breaking Hawaiian air, the "Parting Song."

*"Aloha oe, Aloha oe,
E ke ona ona noho ika lipo.
A fond embrace, a hoi ae au
Until we meet again!"*

The crowd melted, as if by magic. Emma had found Harry, the half-white, who took her off to Hart's for a dish of ice-cream. Mrs. Ross met her old friend Mrs. Halelea who offered her and Lulu a seat in her carriage. They had evidently taken it for granted, in the easy island fashion, that Florence had picked up some friends of her own.

The young girl stood forlornly at the end of the pier leaning against the pile, and trying hard to keep back the tears. Not even a faint finger of smoke on the horizon showed the track of the *Adams*. The *Suez* was already passing the light-house. She sighed wearily and turned, starting violently, to find Christopher Maxwell by her side.

"I have been looking everywhere for you." He tried to speak calmly, but the sight of her tear stained face and the pathetic droop of her lips moved him deeply.

ALOHA OE

“I could not be mistaken in you,” he said; “tell me I was wrong.”

For sole answer she held out her slim, white hands guiltless of rings. Max took them both in his, with a gentle touch, firm but tender. Florence looked deep into the steadfast grey eyes; all her strength seemed to desert her and she swayed towards him.

He gathered her close in his arms. “You are my own girl,” he whispered. “My sweetheart, my wife,” and he kissed her, though there was a shoal of little native boys swimming within a few yards of them.

She drew a long breath, with a little sob in it.

“I wanted to explain about the ring,” she said, “but I was frightened. Oh, Max, I thought you would never, never know.”

“Know what, sweetheart?”

She looked up at him, her face glowing with a new happiness.

“That I love you,” she said.

THE END

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