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On the Makaloa Mat/Island Tales

by Jack London

April, 2000 [Etext #2152]

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ON THE MAKALOA MAT/ISLAND TALES

by Jack London

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ON THE MAKALOA MAT

Unlike the women of most warm races, those of Hawaii age well and

nobly. With no pretence of make-up or cunning concealment of

time's inroads, the woman who sat under the hau tree might have

been permitted as much as fifty years by a judge competent anywhere

over the world save in Hawaii. Yet her children and her

grandchildren, and Roscoe Scandwell who had been her husband for

forty years, knew that she was sixty-four and would be sixty-five

come the next twenty-second day of June. But she did not look it,

despite the fact that she thrust reading glasses on her nose as she

read her magazine and took them off when her gaze desired to wander

in the direction of the half-dozen children playing on the lawn.

It was a noble situation--noble as the ancient hau tree, the size

of a house, where she sat as if in a house, so spaciously and

comfortably house-like was its shade furnished; noble as the lawn

that stretched away landward its plush of green at an appraisement

of two hundred dollars a front foot to a bungalow equally

dignified, noble, and costly. Seaward, glimpsed through a fringe

of hundred-foot coconut palms, was the ocean; beyond the reef a

dark blue that grew indigo blue to the horizon, within the reef all

the silken gamut of jade and emerald and tourmaline.

And this was but one house of the half-dozen houses belonging to

Martha Scandwell. Her town-house, a few miles away in Honolulu, on

Nuuanu Drive between the first and second "showers," was a palace.

Hosts of guests had known the comfort and joy of her mountain house

on Tantalus, and of her volcano house, her mauka house, and her

makai house on the big island of Hawaii. Yet this Waikiki house

stressed no less than the rest in beauty, in dignity, and in

expensiveness of upkeep. Two Japanese yard-boys were trimming

hibiscus, a third was engaged expertly with the long hedge of

night-blooming cereus that was shortly expectant of unfolding in

its mysterious night-bloom. In immaculate ducks, a house Japanese

brought out the tea-things, followed by a Japanese maid, pretty as

a butterfly in the distinctive garb of her race, and fluttery as a

butterfly to attend on her mistress. Another Japanese maid, an

array of Turkish towels on her arm, crossed the lawn well to the

right in the direction of the bath-houses, from which the children,

in swimming suits, were beginning to emerge. Beyond, under the

palms at the edge of the sea, two Chinese nursemaids, in their

pretty native costume of white yee-shon and-straight-lined

trousers, their black braids of hair down their backs, attended

each on a baby in a perambulator.

And all these, servants, and nurses, and grandchildren, were Martha

Scandwell's. So likewise was the colour of the skin of the

grandchildren--the unmistakable Hawaiian colour, tinted beyond

shadow of mistake by exposure to the Hawaiian sun. One-eighth and

one-sixteenth Hawaiian were they, which meant that seven-eighths or

fifteen-sixteenths white blood informed that skin yet failed to

obliterate the modicum of golden tawny brown of Polynesia. But in

this, again, only a trained observer would have known that the

frolicking children were aught but pure-blooded white. Roscoe

Scandwell, grandfather, was pure white; Martha three-quarters

white; the many sons and daughters of them seven-eighths white; the

grandchildren graded up to fifteen-sixteenths white, or, in the

cases when their seven-eighths fathers and mothers had married

seven-eighths, themselves fourteen-sixteenths or seven-eighths

white. On both sides the stock was good, Roscoe straight descended

from the New England Puritans, Martha no less straight descended

from the royal chief-stocks of Hawaii whose genealogies were

chanted in males a thousand years before written speech was

acquired.

In the distance a machine stopped and deposited a woman whose

utmost years might have been guessed as sixty, who walked across

the lawn as lightly as a well-cared-for woman of forty, and whose

actual calendar age was sixty-eight. Martha rose from her seat to

greet her, in the hearty Hawaiian way, arms about, lips on lips,

faces eloquent and bodies no less eloquent with sincereness and

frank excessiveness of emotion. And it was "Sister Bella," and

"Sister Martha," back and forth, intermingled with almost

incoherent inquiries about each other, and about Uncle This and

Brother That and Aunt Some One Else, until, the first tremulousness

of meeting over, eyes moist with tenderness of love, they sat

gazing at each other across their teacups. Apparently, they had

not seen nor embraced for years. In truth, two months marked the

interval of their separation. And one was sixty-four, the other

sixty-eight. But the thorough comprehension resided in the fact

that in each of them one-fourth of them was the sun-warm, love-warm

heart of Hawaii.

The children flooded about Aunt Bella like a rising tide and were

capaciously hugged and kissed ere they departed with their nurses

to the swimming beach.

"I thought I'd run out to the beach for several days--the trades

had stopped blowing," Martha explained.

"You've been here two weeks already," Bella smiled fondly at her

younger sister. "Brother Edward told me. He met me at the steamer

and insisted on running me out first of all to see Louise and

Dorothy and that first grandchild of his. He's as mad as a silly

hatter about it."

"Mercy!" Martha exclaimed. "Two weeks! I had not thought it that

long."

"Where's Annie?--and Margaret?" Bella asked.

Martha shrugged her voluminous shoulders with voluminous and

forgiving affection for her wayward, matronly daughters who left

their children in her care for the afternoon.

"Margaret's at a meeting of the Out-door Circle--they're planning

the planting of trees and hibiscus all along both sides of Kalakaua

Avenue," she said. "And Annie's wearing out eighty dollars' worth

of tyres to collect seventy-five dollars for the British Red Cross-

-this is their tag day, you know."

"Roscoe must be very proud," Bella said, and observed the bright

glow of pride that appeared in her sister's eyes. "I got the news

in San Francisco of Ho-o-la-a's first dividend. Remember when I

put a thousand in it at seventy-five cents for poor Abbie's

children, and said I'd sell when it went to ten dollars?"

"And everybody laughed at you, and at anybody who bought a share,"

Martha nodded. "But Roscoe knew. It's selling to-day at twenty-

four."

"I sold mine from the steamer by wireless--at twenty even," Bella

continued. "And now Abbie's wildly dressmaking. She's going with

May and Tootsie to Paris."

"And Carl?" Martha queried.

"Oh, he'll finish Yale all right--"

"Which he would have done anyway, and you KNOW it," Martha charged,

lapsing charmingly into twentieth-century slang.

Bella affirmed her guilt of intention of paying the way of her

school friend's son through college, and added complacently:

"Just the same it was nicer to have Ho-o-la-a pay for it. In a

way, you see, Roscoe is doing it, because it was his judgment I

trusted to when I made the investment." She gazed slowly about

her, her eyes taking in, not merely the beauty and comfort and

repose of all they rested on, but the immensity of beauty and

comfort and repose represented by them, scattered in similar oases

all over the islands. She sighed pleasantly and observed: "All

our husbands have done well by us with what we brought them."

"And happily . . . " Martha agreed, then suspended her utterance

with suspicious abruptness.

"And happily, all of us, except Sister Bella," Bella forgivingly

completed the thought for her.

"It was too bad, that marriage," Martha murmured, all softness of

sympathy. "You were so young. Uncle Robert should never have made

you."

"I was only nineteen," Bella nodded. "But it was not George

Castner's fault. And look what he, out of she grave, has done for

me. Uncle Robert was wise. He knew George had the far-away vision

of far ahead, the energy, and the steadiness. He saw, even then,

and that's fifty years ago, the value of the Nahala water-rights

which nobody else valued then. They thought he was struggling to

buy the cattle range. He struggled to buy the future of the water-

-and how well he succeeded you know. I'm almost ashamed to think

of my income sometimes. No; whatever else, the unhappiness of our

marriage was not due to George. I could have lived happily with

him, I know, even to this day, had he lived." She shook her head

slowly. "No; it was not his fault. Nor anybody's. Not even mine.

If it was anybody's fault--" The wistful fondness of her smile

took the sting out of what she was about to say. "If it was

anybody's fault it was Uncle John's."

"Uncle John's!" Martha cried with sharp surprise. "If it had to be

one or the other, I should have said Uncle Robert. But Uncle

John!"

Bella smiled with slow positiveness.

"But it was Uncle Robert who made you marry George Castner," her

sister urged.

"That is true," Bella nodded corroboration. "But it was not the

matter of a husband, but of a horse. I wanted to borrow a horse

from Uncle John, and Uncle John said yes. That is how it all

happened."

A silence fell, pregnant and cryptic, and, while the voices of the

children and the soft mandatory protests of the Asiatic maids drew

nearer from the beach, Martha Scandwell felt herself vibrant and

tremulous with sudden resolve of daring. She waved the children

away.

"Run along, dears, run along, Grandma and Aunt Bella want to talk."

And as the shrill, sweet treble of child voices ebbed away across

the lawn, Martha, with scrutiny of the heart, observed the sadness

of the lines graven by secret woe for half a century in her

sister's face. For nearly fifty years had she watched those lines.

She steeled all the melting softness of the Hawaiian of her to

break the half-century of silence.

"Bella," she said. "We never know. You never spoke. But we

wondered, oh, often and often--"

"And never asked," Bella murmured gratefully.

"But I am asking now, at the last. This is our twilight. Listen

to them! Sometimes it almost frightens me to think that they are

grandchildren, MY grandchildren--I, who only the other day, it

would seem, was as heart-free, leg-free, care-free a girl as ever

bestrode a horse, or swam in the big surf, or gathered opihis at

low tide, or laughed at a dozen lovers. And here in our twilight

let us forget everything save that I am your dear sister as you are

mine."

The eyes of both were dewy moist. Bella palpably trembled to

utterance.

"We thought it was George Castner," Martha went on; "and we could

guess the details. He was a cold man. You were warm Hawaiian. He

must have been cruel. Brother Walcott always insisted he must have

beaten you--"

"No! No!" Bella broke in. "George Castner was never a brute, a

beast. Almost have I wished, often, that he had been. He never

laid hand on me. He never raised hand to me. He never raised his

voice to me. Never--oh, can you believe it?--do, please, sister,

believe it--did we have a high word nor a cross word. But that

house of his, of ours, at Nahala, was grey. All the colour of it

was grey and cool, and chill, while I was bright with all colours

of sun, and earth, and blood, and birth. It was very cold, grey

cold, with that cold grey husband of mine at Nahala. You know he

was grey, Martha. Grey like those portraits of Emerson we used to

see at school. His skin was grey. Sun and weather and all hours

in the saddle could never tan it. And he was as grey inside as

out.

"And I was only nineteen when Uncle Robert decided on the marriage.

How was I to know? Uncle Robert talked to me. He pointed out how

the wealth and property of Hawaii was already beginning to pass

into the hands of the haoles" (Whites). "The Hawaiian chiefs let

their possessions slip away from them. The Hawaiian chiefesses,

who married haoles, had their possessions, under the management of

their haole husbands, increase prodigiously. He pointed back to

the original Grandfather Roger Wilton, who had taken Grandmother

Wilton's poor mauka lands and added to them and built up about them

the Kilohana Ranch--"

"Even then it was second only to the Parker Ranch," Martha

interrupted proudly.

"And he told me that had our father, before he died, been as far-

seeing as grandfather, half the then Parker holdings would have

been added to Kilohana, making Kilohana first. And he said that

never, for ever and ever, would beef be cheaper. And he said that

the big future of Hawaii would be in sugar. That was fifty years

ago, and he has been more than proved right. And he said that the

young haole, George Castner, saw far, and would go far, and that

there were many girls of us, and that the Kilohana lands ought by

rights to go to the boys, and that if I married George my future

was assured in the biggest way.

"I was only nineteen. Just back from the Royal Chief School--that

was before our girls went to the States for their education. You

were among the first, Sister Martha, who got their education on the

mainland. And what did I know of love and lovers, much less of

marriage? All women married. It was their business in life.

Mother and grandmother, all the way back they had married. It was

my business in life to marry George Castner. Uncle Robert said so

in his wisdom, and I knew he was very wise. And I went to live

with my husband in the grey house at Nahala.

"You remember it. No trees, only the rolling grass lands, the high

mountains behind, the sea beneath, and the wind!--the Waimea and

Nahala winds, we got them both, and the kona wind as well. Yet

little would I have minded them, any more than we minded them at

Kilohana, or than they minded them at Mana, had not Nahala itself

been so grey, and husband George so grey. We were alone. He was

managing Nahala for the Glenns, who had gone back to Scotland.

Eighteen hundred a year, plus beef, horses, cowboy service, and the

ranch house, was what he received--"

"It was a high salary in those days," Martha said.

"And for George Castner, and the service he gave, it was very

cheap," Bella defended. "I lived with him for three years. There

was never a morning that he was out of his bed later than half-past

four. He was the soul of devotion to his employers. Honest to a

penny in his accounts, he gave them full measure and more of his

time and energy. Perhaps that was what helped make our life so

grey. But listen, Martha. Out of his eighteen hundred, he laid

aside sixteen hundred each year. Think of it! The two of us lived

on two hundred a year. Luckily he did not drink or smoke. Also,

we dressed out of it as well. I made my own dresses. You can

imagine them. Outside of the cowboys who chored the firewood, I

did the work. I cooked, and baked, and scrubbed--"

"You who had never known anything but servants from the time you

were born!" Martha pitied. "Never less than a regiment of them at

Kilohana."

"Oh, but it was the bare, naked, pinching meagreness of it!" Bella

cried out. "How far I was compelled to make a pound of coffee go!

A broom worn down to nothing before a new one was bought! And

beef! Fresh beef and jerky, morning, noon, and night! And

porridge! Never since have I eaten porridge or any breakfast

food."

She arose suddenly and walked a dozen steps away to gaze a moment

with unseeing eyes at the colour-lavish reef while she composed

herself. And she returned to her seat with the splendid, sure,

gracious, high-breasted, noble-headed port of which no out-breeding

can ever rob the Hawaiian woman. Very haole was Bella Castner,

fair-skinned, fine-textured. Yet, as she returned, the high pose

of head, the level-lidded gaze of her long brown eyes under royal

arches of eyebrows, the softly set lines of her small mouth that

fairly sang sweetness of kisses after sixty-eight years--all made

her the very picture of a chiefess of old Hawaii full-bursting

through her ampleness of haole blood. Taller she was than her

sister Martha, if anything more queenly.

"You know we were notorious as poor feeders," Bella laughed lightly

enough. "It was many a mile on either side from Nahala to the next

roof. Belated travellers, or storm-bound ones, would, on occasion,

stop with us overnight. And you know the lavishness of the big

ranches, then and now. How we were the laughing-stock! 'What do

we care!' George would say. 'They live to-day and now. Twenty

years from now will be our turn, Bella. They will be where they

are now, and they will eat out of our hand. We will be compelled

to feed them, they will need to be fed, and we will feed them well;

for we will be rich, Bella, so rich that I am afraid to tell you.

But I know what I know, and you must have faith in me.'

"George was right. Twenty years afterward, though he did not live

to see it, my income was a thousand a month. Goodness! I do not

know what it is to-day. But I was only nineteen, and I would say

to George: 'Now! now! We live now. We may not be alive twenty

years from now. I do want a new broom. And there is a third-rate

coffee that is only two cents a pound more than the awful stuff we

are using. Why couldn't I fry eggs in butter--now? I should

dearly love at least one new tablecloth. Our linen! I'm ashamed

to put a guest between the sheets, though heaven knows they dare

come seldom enough.'

"'Be patient, Bella,' he would reply. 'In a little while, in only

a few years, those that scorn to sit at our table now, or sleep

between our sheets, will be proud of an invitation--those of them

who will not be dead. You remember how Stevens passed out last

year--free-living and easy, everybody's friend but his own. The

Kohala crowd had to bury him, for he left nothing but debts. Watch

the others going the same pace. There's your brother Hal. He

can't keep it up and live five years, and he's breaking his uncles'

hearts. And there's Prince Lilolilo. Dashes by me with half a

hundred mounted, able-bodied, roystering kanakas in his train who

would be better at hard work and looking after their future, for he

will never be king of Hawaii. He will not live to be king of

Hawaii.'

"George was right. Brother Hal died. So did Prince Lilolilo. But

George was not ALL right. He, who neither drank nor smoked, who

never wasted the weight of his arms in an embrace, nor the touch of

his lips a second longer than the most perfunctory of kisses, who

was invariably up before cockcrow and asleep ere the kerosene lamp

had a tenth emptied itself, and who never thought to die, was dead

even more quickly than Brother Hal and Prince Lilolilo.

"'Be patient, Bella,' Uncle Robert would say to me. 'George

Castner is a coming man. I have chosen well for you. Your

hardships now are the hardships on the way to the promised land.

Not always will the Hawaiians rule in Hawaii. Just as they let

their wealth slip out of their hands, so will their rule slip out

of their hands. Political power and the land always go together.

There will be great changes, revolutions no one knows how many nor

of what sort, save that in the end the haole will possess the land

and the rule. And in that day you may well be first lady of

Hawaii, just as surely as George Castner will be ruler of Hawaii.

It is written in the books. It is ever so where the haole

conflicts with the easier races. I, your Uncle Robert, who am

half-Hawaiian and half-haole, know whereof I speak. Be patient,

Bella, be patient.'

"'Dear Bella,' Uncle John would say; and I knew his heart was

tender for me. Thank God, he never told me to be patient. He

knew. He was very wise. He was warm human, and, therefore, wiser

than Uncle Robert and George Castner, who sought the thing, not the

spirit, who kept records in ledgers rather than numbers of heart-

beats breast to breast, who added columns of figures rather than

remembered embraces and endearments of look and speech and touch.

'Dear Bella,' Uncle John would say. He knew. You have heard

always how he was the lover of the Princess Naomi. He was a true

lover. He loved but the once. After her death they said he was

eccentric. He was. He was the one lover, once and always.

Remember that taboo inner room of his at Kilohana that we entered

only after his death and found it his shrine to her. 'Dear Bella,'

it was all he ever said to me, but I knew he knew.

"And I was nineteen, and sun-warm Hawaiian in spite of my three-

quarters haole blood, and I knew nothing save my girlhood

splendours at Kilohana and my Honolulu education at the Royal Chief

School, and my grey husband at Nahala with his grey preachments and

practices of sobriety and thrift, and those two childless uncles of

mine, the one with far, cold vision, the other the broken-hearted,

for-ever-dreaming lover of a dead princess.

"Think of that grey house! I, who had known the ease and the

delights and the ever-laughing joys of Kilohana, and of the Parkers

at old Mana, and of Puuwaawaa! You remember. We did live in

feudal spaciousness in those days. Would you, can you, believe it,

Martha--at Nahala the only sewing machine I had was one of those

the early missionaries brought, a tiny, crazy thing that one

cranked around by hand!

"Robert and John had each given Husband George five thousand

dollars at my marriage. But he had asked for it to be kept secret.

Only the four of us knew. And while I sewed my cheap holokus on

that crazy machine, he bought land with the money--the upper Nahala

lands, you know--a bit at a time, each purchase a hard-driven

bargain, his face the very face of poverty. To-day the Nahala

Ditch alone pays me forty thousand a year.

"But was it worth it? I starved. If only once, madly, he had

crushed me in his arms! If only once he could have lingered with

me five minutes from his own business or from his fidelity to his

employers! Sometimes I could have screamed, or showered the

eternal bowl of hot porridge into his face, or smashed the sewing

machine upon the floor and danced a hula on it, just to make him

burst out and lose his temper and be human, be a brute, be a man of

some sort instead of a grey, frozen demi-god."

Bella's tragic expression vanished, and she laughed outright in

sheer genuineness of mirthful recollection.

"And when I was in such moods he would gravely look me over,

gravely feel my pulse, examine my tongue, gravely dose me with

castor oil, and gravely put me to bed early with hot stove-lids,

and assure me that I'd feel better in the morning. Early to bed!

Our wildest sitting up was nine o'clock. Eight o'clock was our

regular bed-time. It saved kerosene. We did not eat dinner at

Nahala--remember the great table at Kilohana where we did have

dinner? But Husband George and I had supper. And then he would

sit close to the lamp on one side the table and read old borrowed

magazines for an hour, while I sat on the other side and darned his

socks and underclothing. He always wore such cheap, shoddy stuff.

And when he went to bed, I went to bed. No wastage of kerosene

with only one to benefit by it. And he went to bed always the same

way, winding up his watch, entering the day's weather in his diary,

and taking off his shoes, right foot first invariably, left foot

second, and placing them just so, side by side, on the floor, at

the foot of the bed, on his side.

"He was the cleanest man I ever knew. He never wore the same

undergarment a second time. I did the washing. He was so clean it

hurt. He shaved twice a day. He used more water on his body than

any kanaka. He did more work than any two haoles. And he saw the

future of the Nahala water."

"And he made you wealthy, but did not make you happy," Martha

observed.

Bella sighed and nodded.

"What is wealth after all, Sister Martha? My new Pierce-Arrow came

down on the steamer with me. My third in two years. But oh, all

the Pierce-Arrows and all the incomes in the world compared with a

lover!--the one lover, the one mate, to be married to, to toil

beside and suffer and joy beside, the one male man lover husband .

. . "

Her voice trailed off, and the sisters sat in soft silence while an

ancient crone, staff in hand, twisted, doubled, and shrunken under

a hundred years of living, hobbled across the lawn to them. Her

eyes, withered to scarcely more than peepholes, were sharp as a

mongoose's, and at Bella's feet she first sank down, in pure

Hawaiian mumbling and chanting a toothless mele of Bella and

Bella's ancestry and adding to it an extemporized welcome back to

Hawaii after her absence across the great sea to California. And

while she chanted her mele, the old crone's shrewd fingers lomied

or massaged Bella's silk-stockinged legs from ankle and calf to

knee and thigh.

Both Bella's and Martha's eyes were luminous-moist, as the old

retainer repeated the lomi and the mele to Martha, and as they

talked with her in the ancient tongue and asked the immemorial

questions about her health and age and great-great-grandchildren--

she who had lomied them as babies in the great house at Kilohana,

as her ancestresses had lomied their ancestresses back through the

unnumbered generations. The brief duty visit over, Martha arose

and accompanied her back to the bungalow, putting money into her

hand, commanding proud and beautiful Japanese housemaids to wait

upon the dilapidated aborigine with poi, which is compounded of the

roots of the water lily, with iamaka, which is raw fish, and with

pounded kukui nut and limu, which latter is seawood tender to the

toothless, digestible and savoury. It was the old feudal tie, the

faithfulness of the commoner to the chief, the responsibility of

the chief to the commoner; and Martha, three-quarters haole with

the Anglo-Saxon blood of New England, was four-quarters Hawaiian in

her remembrance and observance of the well-nigh vanished customs of

old days.

As she came back across the lawn to the hau tree, Bella's eyes

dwelt upon the moving authenticity of her and of the blood of her,

and embraced her and loved her. Shorter than Bella was Martha, a

trifle, but the merest trifle, less queenly of port; but

beautifully and generously proportioned, mellowed rather than

dismantled by years, her Polynesian chiefess figure eloquent and

glorious under the satisfying lines of a half-fitting, grandly

sweeping, black-silk holoku trimmed with black lace more costly

than a Paris gown.

And as both sisters resumed their talk, an observer would have

noted the striking resemblance of their pure, straight profiles, of

their broad cheek-bones, of their wide and lofty foreheads, of

their iron-grey abundance of hair, of their sweet-lipped mouths set

with the carriage of decades of assured and accomplished pride, and

of their lovely slender eye-rows arched over equally lovely long

brown eyes. The hands of both of them, little altered or defaced

by age, were wonderful in their slender, tapering finger-tips,

love-lomied and love-formed while they were babies by old Hawaiian

women like to the one even then eating poi and iamaka and limu in

the house.

"I had a year of it," Bella resumed, "and, do you know, things were

beginning to come right. I was beginning to draw to Husband

George. Women are so made, I was such a woman at any rate. For he

was good. He was just. All the old sterling Puritan virtues were

his. I was coming to draw to him, to like him, almost, might I

say, to love him. And had not Uncle John loaned me that horse, I

know that I would have truly loved him and have lived ever happily

with him--in a quiet sort of way, of course.

"You see, I knew nothing else, nothing different, nothing better in

the way of men. I came gladly to look across the table at him

while he read in the brief interval between supper and bed, gladly

to listen for and to catch the beat of his horse's hoofs coming

home at night from his endless riding over the ranch. And his

scant praise was praise indeed, that made me tingle with happiness-

-yes, Sister Martha, I knew what it was to blush under his precise,

just praise for the things I had done right or correctly.

"And all would have been well for the rest of our lives together,

except that he had to take steamer to Honolulu. It was business.

He was to be gone two weeks or longer, first, for the Glenns in

ranch affairs, and next for himself, to arrange the purchase of

still more of the upper Nahala lands. Do you know! he bought lots

of the wilder and up-and-down lands, worthless for aught save

water, and the very heart of the watershed, for as low as five and

ten cents an acre. And he suggested I needed a change. I wanted

to go with him to Honolulu. But, with an eye to expense, he

decided Kilohana for me. Not only would it cost him nothing for me

to visit at the old home, but he saved the price of the poor food I

should have eaten had I remained alone at Nahala, which meant the

purchase price of more Nahala acreage. And at Kilohana Uncle John

said yes, and loaned me the horse.

"Oh, it was like heaven, getting back, those first several days.

It was difficult to believe at first that there was so much food in

all the world. The enormous wastage of the kitchen appalled me. I

saw waste everywhere, so well trained had I been by Husband George.

Why, out in the servants' quarters the aged relatives and most

distant hangers-on of the servants fed better than George and I

ever fed. You remember our Kilohana way, same as the Parker way, a

bullock killed for every meal, fresh fish by runners from the ponds

of Waipio and Kiholo, the best and rarest at all times of

everything . . .

"And love, our family way of loving! You know what Uncle John was.

And Brother Walcott was there, and Brother Edward, and all the

younger sisters save you and Sally away at school. And Aunt

Elizabeth, and Aunt Janet with her husband and all her children on

a visit. It was arms around, and perpetual endearings, and all

that I had missed for a weary twelvemonth. I was thirsty for it.

I was like a survivor from the open boat falling down on the sand

and lapping the fresh bubbling springs at the roots of the palms.

"And THEY came, riding up from Kawaihae, where they had landed from

the royal yacht, the whole glorious cavalcade of them, two by two,

flower-garlanded, young and happy, gay, on Parker Ranch horses,

thirty of them in the party, a hundred Parker Ranch cowboys and as

many more of their own retainers--a royal progress. It was

Princess Lihue's progress, of course, she flaming and passing as we

all knew with the dreadful tuberculosis; but with her were her

nephews, Prince Lilolilo, hailed everywhere as the next king, and

his brothers, Prince Kahekili and Prince Kamalau. And with the

Princess was Ella Higginsworth, who rightly claimed higher chief

blood lines through the Kauai descent than belonged to the reigning

family, and Dora Niles, and Emily Lowcroft, and . . . oh, why

enumerate them all! Ella Higginsworth and I had been room-mates at

the Royal Chief School. And there was a great resting time for an

hour--no luau, for the luau awaited them at the Parkers'--but beer

and stronger drinks for the men, and lemonade, and oranges, and

refreshing watermelon for the women.

"And it was arms around with Ella Higginsworth and me, and the

Princess, who remembered me, and all the other girls and women, and

Ella spoke to the Princess, and the Princess herself invited me to

the progress, joining them at Mana whence they would depart two

days later. And I was mad, mad with it all--I, from a twelvemonth

of imprisonment at grey Nahala. And I was nineteen yet, just

turning twenty within the week.

"Oh, I had not thought of what was to happen. So occupied was I

with the women that I did not see Lilolilo, except at a distance,

bulking large and tall above the other men. But I had never been

on a progress. I had seen them entertained at Kilohana and Mana,

but I had been too young to be invited along, and after that it had

been school and marriage. I knew what it would be like--two weeks

of paradise, and little enough for another twelve months at Nahala.

"And I asked Uncle John to lend me a horse, which meant three

horses of course--one mounted cowboy and a pack horse to accompany

me. No roads then. No automobiles. And the horse for myself! It

was Hilo. You don't remember him. You were away at school then,

and before you came home, the following year, he'd broken his back

and his rider's neck wild-cattle-roping up Mauna Kea. You heard

about it--that young American naval officer."

"Lieutenant Bowsfield," Martha nodded.

"But Hilo! I was the first woman on his back. He was a three-

year-old, almost a four-year, and just broken. So black and in

such a vigour of coat that the high lights on him clad him in

shimmering silver. He was the biggest riding animal on the ranch,

descended from the King's Sparklingdow with a range mare for dam,

and roped wild only two weeks before. I never have seen so

beautiful a horse. He had the round, deep-chested, big-hearted,

well-coupled body of the ideal mountain pony, and his head and neck

were true thoroughbred, slender, yet full, with lovely alert ears

not too small to be vicious nor too large to be stubborn mulish.

And his legs and feet were lovely too, unblemished, sure and firm,

with long springy pasterns that made him a wonder of ease under the

saddle."

"I remember hearing Prince Lilolilo tell Uncle John that you were

the best woman rider in all Hawaii," Martha interrupted to say.

"That was two years afterward when I was back from school and while

you were still living at Nahala."

"Lilolilo said that!" Bella cried. Almost as with a blush, her

long, brown eyes were illumined, as she bridged the years to her

lover near half a century dead and dust. With the gentleness of

modesty so innate in the women of Hawaii, she covered her

spontaneous exposure of her heart with added panegyric of Hilo.

"Oh, when he ran with me up the long-grass slopes, and down the

long-grass slopes, it was like hurdling in a dream, for he cleared

the grass at every bound, leaping like a deer, a rabbit, or a fox-

terrier--you know how they do. And cut up, and prance, and high

life! He was a mount for a general, for a Napoleon or a Kitchener.

And he had, not a wicked eye, but, oh, such a roguish eye,

intelligent and looking as if it cherished a joke behind and wanted

to laugh or to perpetrate it. And I asked Uncle John for Hilo.

And Uncle John looked at me, and I looked at him; and, though he

did not say it, I knew he was FEELING 'Dear Bella,' and I knew,

somewhere in his seeing of me, was all his vision of the Princess

Naomi. And Uncle John said yes. That is how it happened.

"But he insisted that I should try Hilo out--myself, rather--at

private rehearsal. He was a handful, a glorious handful. But not

vicious, not malicious. He got away from me over and over again,

but I never let him know. I was not afraid, and that helped me

keep always a feel of him that prevented him from thinking that he

was even a jump ahead of me.

"I have often wondered if Uncle John dreamed of what possibly might

happen. I know I had no thought of it myself, that day I rode

across and joined the Princess at Mana. Never was there such

festal time. You know the grand way the old Parkers had of

entertaining. The pig-sticking and wild-cattle-shooting, the

horse-breaking and the branding. The servants' quarters

overflowing. Parker cowboys in from everywhere. And all the girls

from Waimea up, and the girls from Waipio, and Honokaa, and

Paauilo--I can see them yet, sitting in long rows on top the stone

walls of the breaking pen and making leis" (flower garlands) "for

their cowboy lovers. And the nights, the perfumed nights, the

chanting of the meles and the dancing of the hulas, and the big

Mana grounds with lovers everywhere strolling two by two under the

trees.

"And the Prince . . . " Bella paused, and for a long minute her

small fine teeth, still perfect, showed deep in her underlip as she

sought and won control and sent her gaze vacantly out across the

far blue horizon. As she relaxed, her eyes came back to her

sister.

"He was a prince, Martha. You saw him at Kilohana before . . .

after you came home from seminary. He filled the eyes of any

woman, yes, and of any man. Twenty-five he was, in all-glorious

ripeness of man, great and princely in body as he was great and

princely in spirit. No matter how wild the fun, how reckless mad

the sport, he never seemed to forget that he was royal, and that

all his forebears had been high chiefs even to that first one they

sang in the genealogies, who had navigated his double-canoes to

Tahiti and Raiatea and back again. He was gracious, sweet, kindly

comradely, all friendliness--and severe, and stern, and harsh, if

he were crossed too grievously. It is hard to express what I mean.

He was all man, man, man, and he was all prince, with a strain of

the merry boy in him, and the iron in him that would have made him

a good and strong king of Hawaii had he come to the throne.

"I can see him yet, as I saw him that first day and touched his

hand and talked with him . . . few words and bashful, and anything

but a year-long married woman to a grey haole at grey Nahala. Half

a century ago it was, that meeting--you remember how our young men

then dressed in white shoes and trousers, white silk shirts, with

slashed around the middle the gorgeously colourful Spanish sashes--

and for half a century that picture of him has not faded in my

heart. He was the centre of a group on the lawn, and I was being

brought by Ella Higginsworth to be presented. The Princess Lihue

had just called some teasing chaff to her which had made her halt

to respond and left me halted a pace in front of her.

"His glance chanced to light on me, alone there, perturbed,

embarrassed. Oh, how I see him!--his head thrown back a little,

with that high, bright, imperious, and utterly care-free poise that

was so usual of him. Our eyes met. His head bent forward, or

straightened to me, I don't know what happened. Did he command?

Did I obey? I do not know. I know only that I was good to look

upon, crowned with fragrant maile, clad in Princess Naomi's

wonderful holoku loaned me by Uncle John from his taboo room; and I

know that I advanced alone to him across the Mana lawn, and that he

stepped forth from those about him to meet me half-way. We came to

each other across the grass, unattended, as if we were coming to

each other across our lives.

"--Was I very beautiful, Sister Martha, when I was young? I do not

know. I don't know. But in that moment, with all his beauty and

truly royal-manness crossing to me and penetrating to the heart of

me, I felt a sudden sense of beauty in myself--how shall I say? as

if in him and from him perfection were engendered and conjured

within myself.

"No word was spoken. But, oh, I know I raised my face in frank

answer to the thunder and trumpets of the message unspoken, and

that, had it been death for that one look and that one moment I

could not have refrained from the gift of myself that must have

been in my face and eyes, in the very body of me that breathed so

high.

"Was I beautiful, very beautiful, Martha, when I was nineteen, just

turning into twenty?"

And Martha, three-score and four, looked upon Bella, three-score

and eight, and nodded genuine affirmation, and to herself added the

appreciation of the instant in what she beheld--Bella's neck, still

full and shapely, longer than the ordinary Hawaiian woman's neck, a

pillar that carried regally her high-cheeked, high-browed, high

chiefess face and head; Bella's hair, high-piled, intact, sparkling

the silver of the years, ringleted still and contrasting definitely

and sharply with her clean, slim, black brows and deep brown eyes.

And Martha's glance, in modest overwhelming of modesty by what she

saw, dropped down the splendid breast of her and generously true

lines of body to the feet, silken clad, high-heeled-slippered,

small, plump, with an almost Spanish arch and faultlessness of

instep.

"When one is young, the one young time!" Bella laughed. "Lilolilo

was a prince. I came to know his every feature and their every

phase . . . afterward, in our wonder days and nights by the singing

waters, by the slumber-drowsy surfs, and on the mountain ways. I

knew his fine, brave eyes, with their straight, black brows, the

nose of him that was assuredly a Kamehameha nose, and the last,

least, lovable curve of his mouth. There is no mouth more

beautiful than the Hawaiian, Martha.

"And his body. He was a king of athletes, from his wicked, wayward

hair to his ankles of bronzed steel. Just the other day I heard

one of the Wilder grandsons referred to as 'The Prince of Harvard.'

Mercy! What would they, what could they have called my Lilolilo

could they have matched him against this Wilder lad and all his

team at Harvard!"

Bella ceased and breathed deeply, the while she clasped her fine

small hands in her ample silken lap. But her pink fairness blushed

faintly through her skin and warmed her eyes as she relived her

prince-days.

"Well--you have guessed?" Bella said, with defiant shrug of

shoulders and a straight gaze into her sister's eyes. "We rode out

from gay Mana and continued the gay progress--down the lava trails

to Kiholo to the swimming and the fishing and the feasting and the

sleeping in the warm sand under the palms; and up to Puuwaawaa, and

more pig-sticking, and roping and driving, and wild mutton from the

upper pasture-lands; and on through Kona, now mauka"

(mountainward), "now down to the King's palace at Kailua, and to

the swimming at Keauhou, and to Kealakekua Bay, and Napoopoo and

Honaunau. And everywhere the people turning out, in their hands

gifts of flowers, and fruit, and fish, and pig, in their hearts

love and song, their heads bowed in obeisance to the royal ones

while their lips ejaculated exclamations of amazement or chanted

meles of old and unforgotten days.

"What would you, Sister Martha? You know what we Hawaiians are.

You know what we were half a hundred years ago. Lilolilo was

wonderful. I was reckless. Lilolilo of himself could make any

woman reckless. I was twice reckless, for I had cold, grey Nahala

to spur me on. I knew. I had never a doubt. Never a hope.

Divorces in those days were undreamed. The wife of George Castner

could never be queen of Hawaii, even if Uncle Robert's prophesied

revolutions were delayed, and if Lilolilo himself became king. But

I never thought of the throne. What I wanted would have been the

queendom of being Lilolilo's wife and mate. But I made no mistake.

What was impossible was impossible, and I dreamed no false dream.

"It was the very atmosphere of love. And Lilolilo was a lover. I

was for ever crowned with leis by him, and he had his runners bring

me leis all the way from the rose-gardens of Mana--you remember

them; fifty miles across the lava and the ranges, dewy fresh as the

moment they were plucked, in their jewel-cases of banana bark;

yard-long they were, the tiny pink buds like threaded beads of

Neapolitan coral. And at the luaus" (feasts) the for ever never-

ending luaus, I must be seated on Lilolilo's Makaloa mat, the

Prince's mat, his alone and taboo to any lesser mortal save by his

own condescension and desire. And I must dip my fingers into his

own pa wai holoi" (finger-bowl) "where scented flower petals

floated in the warm water. Yes, and careless that all should see

his extended favour, I must dip into his pa paakai for my pinches

of red salt, and limu, and kukui nut and chili pepper; and into his

ipu kai" (fish sauce dish) "of kou wood that the great Kamehameha

himself had eaten from on many a similar progress. And it was the

same for special delicacies that were for Lilolilo and the Princess

alone--for his nelu, and the ake, and the palu, and the alaala.

And his kahilis were waved over me, and his attendants were mine,

and he was mine; and from my flower-crowned hair to my happy feet I

was a woman loved."

Once again Bella's small teeth pressed into her underlip, as she

gazed vacantly seaward and won control of herself and her memories.

"It was on, and on, through all Kona, and all Kau, from Hoopuloa

and Kapua to Honuapo and Punaluu, a life-time of living compressed

into two short weeks. A flower blooms but once. That was my time

of bloom--Lilolilo beside me, myself on my wonderful Hilo, a queen,

not of Hawaii, but of Lilolilo and Love. He said I was a bubble of

colour and beauty on the black back of Leviathan; that I was a

fragile dewdrop on the smoking crest of a lava flow; that I was a

rainbow riding the thunder cloud . . . "

Bella paused for a moment.

"I shall tell you no more of what he said to me," she declared

gravely; "save that the things he said were fire of love and

essence of beauty, and that he composed hulas to me, and sang them

to me, before all, of nights under the stars as we lay on our mats

at the feasting; and I on the Makaloa mat of Lilolilo.

"And it was on to Kilauea--the dream so near its ending; and of

course we tossed into the pit of sea-surging lava our offerings to

the Fire-Goddess of maile leis and of fish and hard poi wrapped

moist in the ti leaves. And we continued down through old Puna,

and feasted and danced and sang at Kohoualea and Kamaili and

Opihikao, and swam in the clear, sweet-water pools of Kalapana.

And in the end came to Hilo by the sea.

"It was the end. We had never spoken. It was the end recognized

and unmentioned. The yacht waited. We were days late. Honolulu

called, and the news was that the King had gone particularly

pupule" (insane), "that there were Catholic and Protestant

missionary plottings, and that trouble with France was brewing. As

they had landed at Kawaihae two weeks before with laughter and

flowers and song, so they departed from Hilo. It was a merry

parting, full of fun and frolic and a thousand last messages and

reminders and jokes. The anchor was broken out to a song of

farewell from Lilolilo's singing boys on the quarterdeck, while we,

in the big canoes and whaleboats, saw the first breeze fill the

vessel's sails and the distance begin to widen.

"Through all the confusion and excitement, Lilolilo, at the rail,

who must say last farewells and quip last jokes to many, looked

squarely down at me. On his head he wore my ilima lei, which I had

made for him and placed there. And into the canoes, to the

favoured ones, they on the yacht began tossing their many leis. I

had no expectancy of hope . . . And yet I hoped, in a small wistful

way that I know did not show in my face, which was as proud and

merry as any there. But Lilolilo did what I knew he would do, what

I had known from the first he would do. Still looking me squarely

and honestly in the eyes, he took my beautiful ilima lei from his

head and tore it across. I saw his lips shape, but not utter

aloud, the single word pau" (finish). "Still looking at me, he

broke both parts of the lei in two again and tossed the deliberate

fragments, not to me, but down overside into the widening water.

Pau. It was finished . . . "

For a long space Bella's vacant gaze rested on the sea horizon.

Martha ventured no mere voice expression of the sympathy that

moistened her own eyes.

"And I rode on that day, up the old bad trail along the Hamakua

coast," Bella resumed, with a voice at first singularly dry and

harsh. "That first day was not so hard. I was numb. I was too

full with the wonder of all I had to forget to know that I had to

forget it. I spent the night at Laupahoehoe. Do you know, I had

expected a sleepless night. Instead, weary from the saddle, still

numb, I slept the night through as if I had been dead.

"But the next day, in driving wind and drenching rain! How it blew

and poured! The trail was really impassable. Again and again our

horses went down. At fist the cowboy Uncle John had loaned me with

the horses protested, then he followed stolidly in the rear,

shaking his head, and, I know, muttering over and over that I was

pupule. The pack horse was abandoned at Kukuihaele. We almost

swam up Mud Lane in a river of mud. At Waimea the cowboy had to

exchange for a fresh mount. But Hilo lasted through. From

daybreak till midnight I was in the saddle, till Uncle John, at

Kilohana, took me off my horse, in his arms, and carried me in, and

routed the women from their beds to undress me and lomi me, while

he plied me with hot toddies and drugged me to sleep and

forgetfulness. I know I must have babbled and raved. Uncle John

must have guessed. But never to another, nor even to me, did he

ever breathe a whisper. Whatever he guessed he locked away in the

taboo room of Naomi.

"I do have fleeting memories of some of that day, all a broken-

hearted mad rage against fate--of my hair down and whipped wet and

stinging about me in the driving rain; of endless tears of weeping

contributed to the general deluge, of passionate outbursts and

resentments against a world all twisted and wrong, of beatings of

my hands upon my saddle pommel, of asperities to my Kilohana

cowboy, of spurs into the ribs of poor magnificent Hilo, with a

prayer on my lips, bursting out from my heart, that the spurs would

so madden him as to make him rear and fall on me and crush my body

for ever out of all beauty for man, or topple me off the trail and

finish me at the foot of the palis" (precipices), "writing pau at

the end of my name as final as the unuttered pau on Lilolilo's lips

when he tore across my ilima lei and dropped it in the sea. . . .

"Husband George was delayed in Honolulu. When he came back to

Nahala I was there waiting for him. And solemnly he embraced me,

perfunctorily kissed my lips, gravely examined my tongue, decried

my looks and state of health, and sent me to bed with hot stove-

lids and a dosage of castor oil. Like entering into the machinery

of a clock and becoming one of the cogs or wheels, inevitably and

remorselessly turning around and around, so I entered back into the

grey life of Nahala. Out of bed was Husband George at half after

four every morning, and out of the house and astride his horse at

five. There was the eternal porridge, and the horrible cheap

coffee, and the fresh beef and jerky. I cooked, and baked, and

scrubbed. I ground around the crazy hand sewing machine and made

my cheap holokus. Night after night, through the endless centuries

of two years more, I sat across the table from him until eight

o'clock, mending his cheap socks and shoddy underwear, while he

read the years' old borrowed magazines he was too thrifty to

subscribe to. And then it was bed-time--kerosene must be

economized--and he wound his watch, entered the weather in his

diary, and took off his shoes, the right shoe first, and placed

them, just so, side by side, at the foot of the bed on his side.

"But there was no more of my drawing to Husband George, as had been

the promise ere the Princess Lihue invited me on the progress and

Uncle John loaned me the horse. You see, Sister Martha, nothing

would have happened had Uncle John refused me the horse. But I had

known love, and I had known Lilolilo; and what chance, after that,

had Husband George to win from me heart of esteem or affection?

And for two years, at Nahala, I was a dead woman who somehow walked

and talked, and baked and scrubbed, and mended socks and saved

kerosene. The doctors said it was the shoddy underwear that did

for him, pursuing as always the high-mountain Nahala waters in the

drenching storms of midwinter.

"When he died, I was not sad. I had been sad too long already.

Nor was I glad. Gladness had died at Hilo when Lilolilo dropped my

ilima lei into the sea and my feet were never happy again.

Lilolilo passed within a month after Husband George. I had never

seen him since the parting at Hilo. La, la, suitors a many have I

had since; but I was like Uncle John. Mating for me was but once.

Uncle John had his Naomi room at Kilohana. I have had my Lilolilo

room for fifty years in my heart. You are the first, Sister

Martha, whom I have permitted to enter that room . . . "

A machine swung the circle of the drive, and from it, across the

lawn, approached the husband of Martha. Erect, slender, grey-

haired, of graceful military bearing, Roscoe Scandwell was a member

of the "Big Five," which, by the interlocking of interests,

determined the destinies of all Hawaii. Himself pure haole, New

England born, he kissed Bella first, arms around, full-hearty, in

the Hawaiian way. His alert eye told him that there had been a

woman talk, and, despite the signs of all generousness of emotion,

that all was well and placid in the twilight wisdom that was

theirs.

"Elsie and the younglings are coming--just got a wireless from

their steamer," he announced, after he had kissed his wife. "And

they'll be spending several days with us before they go on to

Maui."

"I was going to put you in the Rose Room, Sister Bella," Martha

Scandwell planned aloud. "But it will be better for her and the

children and the nurses and everything there, so you shall have

Queen Emma's Room."

"I had it last time, and I prefer it," Bella said.

Roscoe Scandwell, himself well taught of Hawaiian love and love-

ways, erect, slender, dignified, between the two nobly proportioned

women, an arm around each of their sumptuous waists, proceeded with

them toward the house.

WAIKIKI, HAWAII.

June 6, 1916

THE BONES OF KAHEKILI

From over the lofty Koolau Mountains, vagrant wisps of the trade

wind drifted, faintly swaying the great, unwhipped banana leaves,

rustling the palms, and fluttering and setting up a whispering

among the lace-leaved algaroba trees. Only intermittently did the

atmosphere so breathe--for breathing it was, the suspiring of the

languid, Hawaiian afternoon. In the intervals between the soft

breathings, the air grew heavy and balmy with the perfume of

flowers and the exhalations of fat, living soil.

Of humans about the low bungalow-like house, there were many; but

one only of them slept. The rest were on the tense tiptoes of

silence. At the rear of the house a tiny babe piped up a thin

blatting wail that the quickly thrust breast could not appease.

The mother, a slender hapa-haole (half-white), clad in a loose-

flowing holoku of white muslin, hastened away swiftly among the

banana and papaia trees to remove the babe's noise by distance.

Other women, hapa-haole and full native, watched her anxiously as

she fled.

At the front of the house, on the grass, squatted a score of

Hawaiians. Well-muscled, broad-shouldered, they were all strapping

men. Brown-skinned, with luminous brown eyes and black, their

features large and regular, they showed all the signs of being as

good-natured, merry-hearted, and soft-tempered as the climate. To

all of which a seeming contradiction was given by the ferociousness

of their accoutrement. Into the tops of their rough leather

leggings were thrust long knives, the handles projecting. On their

heels were huge-rowelled Spanish spurs. They had the appearance of

banditti, save for the incongruous wreaths of flowers and fragrant

maile that encircled the crowns of their flopping cowboy hats. One

of them, deliciously and roguishly handsome as a faun, with the

eyes of a faun, wore a flaming double-hibiscus bloom coquettishly

tucked over his ear. Above them, casting a shelter of shade from

the sun, grew a wide-spreading canopy of Ponciana regia, itself a

flame of blossoms, out of each of which sprang pom-poms of feathery

stamens. From far off, muffled by distance, came the faint

stamping of their tethered horses. The eyes of all were intently

fixed upon the solitary sleeper who lay on his back on a lauhala

mat a hundred feet away under the monkey-pod trees.

Large as were the Hawaiian cowboys, the sleeper was larger. Also,

as his snow-white hair and beard attested, he was much older. The

thickness of his wrist and the greatness of his fingers made

authentic the mighty frame of him hidden under loose dungaree pants

and cotton shirt, buttonless, open from midriff to Adam's apple,

exposing a chest matted with a thatch of hair as white as that of

his head and face. The depth and breadth of that chest, its

resilience, and its relaxed and plastic muscles, tokened the knotty

strength that still resided in him. Further, no bronze and beat of

sun and wind availed to hide the testimony of his skin that he was

all haole--a white man.

On his back, his great white beard, thrust skyward, untrimmed of

barbers, stiffened and subsided with every breath, while with the

outblow of every exhalation the white moustache erected

perpendicularly like the quills of a porcupine and subsided with

each intake. A young girl of fourteen, clad only in a single

shift, or muumuu, herself a grand-daughter of the sleeper, crouched

beside him and with a feathered fly-flapper brushed away the flies.

In her face were depicted solicitude, and nervousness, and awe, as

if she attended on a god.

And truly, Hardman Pool, the sleeping whiskery one, was to her, and

to many and sundry, a god--a source of life, a source of food, a

fount of wisdom, a giver of law, a smiling beneficence, a blackness

of thunder and punishment--in short, a man-master whose record was

fourteen living and adult sons and daughters, six great-

grandchildren, and more grandchildren than could he in his most

lucid moments enumerate.

Fifty-one years before, he had landed from an open boat at

Laupahoehoe on the windward coast of Hawaii. The boat was the one

surviving one of the whaler Black Prince of New Bedford. Himself

New Bedford born, twenty years of age, by virtue of his driving

strength and ability he had served as second mate on the lost

whaleship. Coming to Honolulu and casting about for himself, he

had first married Kalama Mamaiopili, next acted as pilot of

Honolulu Harbour, after that started a saloon and boarding house,

and, finally, on the death of Kalama's father, engaged in cattle

ranching on the broad pasture lands she had inherited.

For over half a century he had lived with the Hawaiians, and it was

conceded that he knew their language better than did most of them.

By marrying Kalama, he had married not merely her land, but her own

chief rank, and the fealty owed by the commoners to her by virtue

of her genealogy was also accorded him. In addition, he possessed

of himself all the natural attributes of chiefship: the gigantic

stature, the fearlessness, the pride; and the high hot temper that

could brook no impudence nor insult, that could be neither bullied

nor awed by any utmost magnificence of power that walked on two

legs, and that could compel service of lesser humans, not by any

ignoble purchase by bargaining, but by an unspoken but expected

condescending of largesse. He knew his Hawaiians from the outside

and the in, knew them better than themselves, their Polynesian

circumlocutions, faiths, customs, and mysteries.

And at seventy-one, after a morning in the saddle over the ranges

that began at four o'clock, he lay under the monkey-pods in his

customary and sacred siesta that no retainer dared to break, nor

would dare permit any equal of the great one to break. Only to the

King was such a right accorded, and, as the King had early learned,

to break Hardman Pool's siesta was to gain awake a very irritable

and grumpy Hardman Pool who would talk straight from the shoulder

and say unpleasant but true things that no king would care to hear.

The sun blazed down. The horses stamped remotely. The fading

trade-wind wisps sighed and rustled between longer intervals of

quiescence. The perfume grew heavier. The woman brought back the

babe, quiet again, to the rear of the house. The monkey-pods

folded their leaves and swooned to a siesta of their own in the

soft air above the sleeper. The girl, breathless as ever from the

enormous solemnity of her task, still brushed the flies away; and

the score of cowboys still intently and silently watched.

Hardman Pool awoke. The next out-breath, expected of the long

rhythm, did not take place. Neither did the white, long moustache

rise up. Instead, the cheeks, under the whiskers, puffed; the

eyelids lifted, exposing blue eyes, choleric and fully and

immediately conscious; the right hand went out to the half-smoked

pipe beside him, while the left hand reached the matches.

"Get me my gin and milk," he ordered, in Hawaiian, of the little

maid, who had been startled into a tremble by his awaking.

He lighted the pipe, but gave no sign of awareness of the presence

of his waiting retainers until the tumbler of gin and milk had been

brought and drunk.

"Well?" he demanded abruptly, and in the pause, while twenty faces

wreathed in smiles and twenty pairs of dark eyes glowed luminously

with well-wishing pleasure, he wiped the lingering drops of gin and

milk from his hairy lips. "What are you hanging around for? What

do you want? Come over here."

Twenty giants, most of them young, uprose and with a great clanking

and jangling of spurs and spur-chains strode over to him. They

grouped before him in a semicircle, trying bashfully to wedge their

shoulders, one behind another's, their faces a-grin and apologetic,

and at the same time expressing a casual and unconscious

democraticness. In truth, to them Hardman Pool was more than mere

chief. He was elder brother, or father, or patriarch; and to all

of them he was related, in one way or another, according to

Hawaiian custom, through his wife and through the many marriages of

his children and grandchildren. His slightest frown might perturb

them, his anger terrify them, his command compel them to certain

death; yet, on the other hand, not one of them would have dreamed

of addressing him otherwise than intimately by his first name,

which name, "Hardman," was transmuted by their tongues into Kanaka

Oolea.

At a nod from him, the semicircle seated itself on the manienie

grass, and with further deprecatory smiles waited his pleasure.

"What do you want?" demanded, in Hawaiian, with a brusqueness and

sternness they knew were put on.

They smiled more broadly, and deliciously squirmed their broad

shoulders and great torsos with the appeasingness of so many

wriggling puppies. Hardman Pool singled out one of them.

"Well, Iliiopoi, what do YOU want?"

"Ten dollars, Kanaka Oolea."

"Ten dollars!" Pool cried, in apparent shock at mention of so vast

a sum. "Does it mean you are going to take a second wife?

Remember the missionary teaching. One wife at a time, Iliiopoi;

one wife at a time. For he who entertains a plurality of wives

will surely go to hell."

Giggles and flashings of laughing eyes from all greeted the joke.

"No, Kanaka Oolea," came the reply. "The devil knows I am hard put

to get kow-kow for one wife and her several relations."

"Kow-kow?" Pool repeated the Chinese-introduced word for food which

the Hawaiians had come to substitute for their own paina. "Didn't

you boys get kow-kow here this noon?"

"Yes, Kanaka Oolea," volunteered an old, withered native who had

just joined the group from the direction of the house. "All of

them had kow-kow in the kitchen, and plenty of it. They ate like

lost horses brought down from the lava."

"And what do you want, Kumuhana?" Pool diverted to the old one, at

the same time motioning to the little maid to flap flies from the

other side of him.

"Twelve dollars," said Kumuhana. "I want to buy a Jackass and a

second-hand saddle and bridle. I am growing too old for my legs to

carry me in walking."

"You wait," his haole lord commanded. "I will talk with you about

the matter, and about other things of importance, when I am

finished with the rest and they are gone."

The withered old one nodded and proceeded to light his pipe.

"The kow-kow in the kitchen was good," Iliiopoi resumed, licking

his lips. "The poi was one-finger, the pig fat, the salmon-belly

unstinking, the fish of great freshness and plenty, though the

opihis" (tiny, rock-clinging shell-fish) "had been salted and

thereby made tough. Never should the opihis be salted. Often have

I told you, Kanaka Oolea, that opihis should never be salted. I am

full of good kow-kow. My belly is heavy with it. Yet is my heart

not light of it because there is no kow-kow in my own house, where

is my wife, who is the aunt of your fourth son's second wife, and

where is my baby daughter, and my wife's old mother, and my wife's

old mother's feeding child that is a cripple, and my wife's sister

who lives likewise with us along with her three children, the

father being dead of a wicked dropsy--"

"Will five dollars save all of you from funerals for a day or

several?" Pool testily cut the tale short.

"Yes, Kanaka Oolea, and as well it will buy my wife a new comb and

some tobacco for myself."

From a gold-sack drawn from the hip-pocket of his dungarees,

Hardman Pool drew the gold piece and tossed it accurately into the

waiting hand.

To a bachelor who wanted six dollars for new leggings, tobacco, and

spurs, three dollars were given; the same to another who needed a

hat; and to a third, who modestly asked for two dollars, four were

given with a flowery-worded compliment anent his prowess in roping

a recent wild bull from the mountains. They knew, as a rule, that

he cut their requisitions in half, therefore they doubled the size

of their requisitions. And Hardman Pool knew they doubled, and

smiled to himself. It was his way, and, further, it was a very

good way with his multitudinous relatives, and did not reduce his

stature in their esteem.

"And you, Ahuhu?" he demanded of one whose name meant "poison-

wood."

"And the price of a pair of dungarees," Ahuhu concluded his list of

needs. "I have ridden much and hard after your cattle, Kanaka

Oolea, and where my dungarees have pressed against the seat of the

saddle there is no seat to my dungarees. It is not well that it be

said that a Kanaka Oolea cowboy, who is also a cousin of Kanaka

Oolea's wife's half-sister, should be shamed to be seen out of the

saddle save that he walks backward from all that behold him."

"The price of a dozen pairs of dungarees be thine, Ahuhu," Hardman

Pool beamed, tossing to him the necessary sum. "I am proud that my

family shares my pride. Afterward, Ahuhu, out of the dozen

dungarees you will give me one, else shall I be compelled to walk

backward, my own and only dungarees being in like manner well worn

and shameful."

And in laughter of love at their haole chief's final sally, all the

sweet-child-minded and physically gorgeous company of them departed

to their waiting horses, save the old withered one, Kumuhana, who

had been bidden to wait.

For a full five minutes they sat in silence. Then Hardman Pool

ordered the little maid to fetch a tumbler of gin and milk, which,

when she brought it, he nodded her to hand to Kumuhana. The glass

did not leave his lips until it was empty, whereon he gave a great

audible out-breath of "A-a-ah," and smacked his lips.

"Much awa have I drunk in my time," he said reflectively. "Yet is

the awa but a common man's drink, while the haole liquor is a drink

for chiefs. The awa has not the liquor's hot willingness, its spur

in the ribs of feeling, its biting alive of oneself that is very

pleasant since it is pleasant to be alive."

Hardman Pool smiled, nodded agreement, and old Kumuhana continued.

"There is a warmingness to it. It warms the belly and the soul.

It warms the heart. Even the soul and the heart grow cold when one

is old."

"You ARE old," Pool conceded. "Almost as old as I."

Kumuhana shook his head and murmured. "Were I no older than you I

would be as young as you."

"I am seventy-one," said Pool.

"I do not know ages that way," was the reply. "What happened when

you were born?"

"Let me see," Pool calculated. "This is 1880. Subtract seventy-

one, and it leaves nine. I was born in 1809, which is the year

Keliimakai died, which is the year the Scotchman, Archibald

Campbell, lived in Honolulu."

"Then am I truly older than you, Kanaka Oolea. I remember the

Scotchman well, for I was playing among the grass houses of

Honolulu at the time, and already riding a surf-board in the

wahine" (woman) "surf at Waikiki. I can take you now to the spot

where was the Scotchman's grass house. The Seaman's Mission stands

now on the very ground. Yet do I know when I was born. Often my

grandmother and my mother told me of it. I was born when Madame

Pele" (the Fire Goddess or Volcano Goddess) "became angry with the

people of Paiea because they sacrificed no fish to her from their

fish-pool, and she sent down a flow of lava from Huulalai and

filled up their pond. For ever was the fish-pond of Paiea filled

up. That was when I was born."

"That was in 1801, when James Boyd was building ships for

Kamehameha at Hilo," Pool cast back through the calendar; "which

makes you seventy-nine, or eight years older than I. You are very

old."

"Yes, Kanaka Oolea," muttered Kumuhana, pathetically attempting to

swell his shrunken chest with pride.

"And you are very wise."

"Yes, Kanaka Oolea."

"And you know many of the secret things that are known only to old

men."

"Yes, Kanaka Oolea."

"And then you know--" Hardman Pool broke off, the more effectively

to impress and hypnotize the other ancient with the set stare of

his pale-washed blue eyes. "They say the bones of Kahekili were

taken from their hiding-place and lie to-day in the Royal

Mausoleum. I have heard it whispered that you alone of all living

men truly know."

"I know," was the proud answer. "I alone know."

"Well, do they lie there? Yes or no?"

"Kahekili was an alii" (high chief). "It is from this straight

line that your wife Kalama came. She is an alii." The old

retainer paused and pursed his lean lips in meditation. "I belong

to her, as all my people before me belonged to her people before

her. She only can command the great secrets of me. She is wise,

too wise ever to command me to speak this secret. To you, O Kanaka

Oolea, I do not answer yes, I do not answer no. This is a secret

of the aliis that even the aliis do not know."

"Very good, Kumuhana," Hardman Pool commanded. "Yet do you forget

that I am an alii, and that what my good Kalama does not dare ask,

I command to ask. I can send for her, now, and tell her to command

your answer. But such would be a foolishness unless you prove

yourself doubly foolish. Tell me the secret, and she will never

know. A woman's lips must pour out whatever flows in through her

ears, being so made. I am a man, and man is differently made. As

you well know, my lips suck tight on secrets as a squid sucks to

the salty rock. If you will not tell me alone, then will you tell

Kalama and me together, and her lips will talk, her lips will talk,

so that the latest malahini will shortly know what, otherwise, you

and I alone will know."

Long time Kumuhana sat on in silence, debating the argument and

finding no way to evade the fact-logic of it.

"Great is your haole wisdom," he conceded at last.

"Yes? or no?" Hardman Pool drove home the point of his steel.

Kumuhana looked about him first, then slowly let his eyes come to

rest on the fly-flapping maid.

"Go," Pool commanded her. "And come not back without you hear a

clapping of my hands."

Hardman Pool spoke no further, even after the flapper had

disappeared into the house; yet his face adamantly looked: "Yes or

no?"

Again Kumuhana looked carefully about him, and up into the monkey-

pod boughs as if to apprehend a lurking listener. His lips were

very dry. With his tongue he moistened them repeatedly. Twice he

essayed to speak, but was inarticulately husky. And finally, with

bowed head, he whispered, so low and solemnly that Hardman Pool

bent his own head to hear: "No."

Pool clapped his hands, and the little maid ran out of the house to

him in tremulous, fluttery haste.

"Bring a milk and gin for old Kumuhana, here," Pool commanded; and,

to Kumuhana: "Now tell me the whole story."

"Wait," was the answer. "Wait till the little wahine has come and

gone."

And when the maid was gone, and the gin and milk had travelled the

way predestined of gin and milk when mixed together, Hardman Pool

waited without further urge for the story. Kumuhana pressed his

hand to his chest and coughed hollowly at intervals, bidding for

encouragement; but in the end, of himself, spoke out.

"It was a terrible thing in the old days when a great alii died.

Kahekili was a great alii. He might have been king had he lived.

Who can tell? I was a young man, not yet married. You know,

Kanaka Oolea, when Kahekili died, and you can tell me how old I

was. He died when Governor Boki ran the Blonde Hotel here in

Honolulu. You have heard?"

"I was still on windward Hawaii," Pool answered. "But I have

heard. Boki made a distillery, and leased Manoa lands to grow

sugar for it, and Kaahumanu, who was regent, cancelled the lease,

rooted out the cane, and planted potatoes. And Boki was angry, and

prepared to make war, and gathered his fighting men, with a dozen

whaleship deserters and five brass six-pounders, out at Waikiki--"

"That was the very time Kahekili died," Kumuhana broke in eagerly.

"You are very wise. You know many things of the old days better

than we old kanakas."

"It was 1829," Pool continued complacently. "You were twenty-eight

years old, and I was twenty, just coming ashore in the open boat

after the burning of the Black Prince."

"I was twenty-eight," Kumuhana resumed. "It sounds right. I

remember well Boki's brass guns at Waikiki. Kahekili died, too, at

the time, at Waikiki. The people to this day believe his bones

were taken to the Hale o Keawe" (mausoleum) "at Honaunau, in Kona--

"

"And long afterward were brought to the Royal Mausoleum here in

Honolulu," Pool supplemented.

"Also, Kanaka Oolea, there are some who believe to this day that

Queen Alice has them stored with the rest of her ancestral bones in

the big jars in her taboo room. All are wrong. I know. The

sacred bones of Kahekili are gone and for ever gone. They rest

nowhere. They have ceased to be. And many kona winds have

whitened the surf at Waikiki since the last man looked upon the

last of Kahekili. I alone remain alive of those men. I am the

last man, and I was not glad to be at the finish.

"For see! I was a young man, and my heart was white-hot lava for

Malia, who was in Kahekili's household. So was Anapuni's heart

white-hot for her, though the colour of his heart was black, as you

shall see. We were at a drinking that night--Anapuni and I--the

night that Kahekili died. Anapuni and I were only commoners, as

were all of us kanakas and wahines who were at the drinking with

the common sailors and whaleship men from before the mast. We were

drinking on the mats by the beach at Waikiki, close to the old

heiau" (temple) "that is not far from what is now the Wilders'

beach place. I learned then and for ever what quantities of drink

haole sailormen can stand. As for us kanakas, our heads were hot

and light and rattly as dry gourds with the whisky and the rum.

"It was past midnight, I remember well, when I saw Malia, whom

never had I seen at a drinking, come across the wet-hard sand of

the beach. My brain burned like red cinders of hell as I looked

upon Anapuni look upon her, he being nearest to her by being across

from me in the drinking circle. Oh, I know it was whisky and rum

and youth that made the heat of me; but there, in that moment, the

mad mind of me resolved, if she spoke to him and yielded to dance

with him first, that I would put both my hands around his throat

and throw him down and under the wahine surf there beside us, and

drown and choke out his life and the obstacle of him that stood

between me and her. For know, that she had never decided between

us, and it was because of him that she was not already and long

since mine.

"She was a grand young woman with a body generous as that of a

chiefess and more wonderful, as she came upon us, across the wet

sand, in the shimmer of the moonlight. Even the haole sailormen

made pause of silence, and with open mouths stared upon her. Her

walk! I have heard you talk, O Kanaka Oolea, of the woman Helen

who caused the war of Troy. I say of Malia that more men would

have stormed the walls of hell for her than went against that old-

time city of which it is your custom to talk over much and long

when you have drunk too little milk and too much gin.

"Her walk! In the moonlight there, the soft glow-fire of the

jelly-fishes in the surf like the kerosene-lamp footlights I have

seen in the new haole theatre! It was not the walk of a girl, but

a woman. She did not flutter forward like rippling wavelets on a

reef-sheltered, placid beach. There was that in her manner of walk

that was big and queenlike, like the motion of the forces of

nature, like the rhythmic flow of lava down the slopes of Kau to

the sea, like the movement of the huge orderly trade-wind seas,

like the rise and fall of the four great tides of the year that may

be like music in the eternal ear of God, being too slow of

occurrence in time to make a tune for ordinary quick-pulsing,

brief-living, swift-dying man.

"Anapuni was nearest. But she looked at me. Have you ever heard a

call, Kanaka Oolea, that is without sound yet is louder than the

conches of God? So called she to me across that circle of the

drinking. I half arose, for I was not yet full drunken; but

Anapuni's arm caught her and drew her, and I sank back on my elbow

and watched and raged. He was for making her sit beside him, and I

waited. Did she sit, and, next, dance with him, I knew that ere

morning Anapuni would be a dead man, choked and drowned by me in

the shallow surf.

"Strange, is it not, Kanaka Oolea, all this heat called 'love'?

Yet it is not strange. It must be so in the time of one's youth,

else would mankind not go on."

"That is why the desire of woman must be greater than the desire of

life," Pool concurred. "Else would there be neither men nor

women."

"Yes," said Kumuhana. "But it is many a year now since the last of

such heat has gone out of me. I remember it as one remembers an

old sunrise--a thing that was. And so one grows old, and cold, and

drinks gin, not for madness, but for warmth. And the milk is very

nourishing.

"But Malia did not sit beside him. I remember her eyes were wild,

her hair down and flying, as she bent over him and whispered in his

ear. And her hair covered him about and hid him as she whispered,

and the sight of it pounded my heart against my ribs and dizzied my

head till scarcely could I half-see. And I willed myself with all

the will of me that if, in short minutes, she did not come over to

me, I would go across the circle and get her.

"It was one of the things never to be. You remember Chief

Konukalani? Himself he strode up to the circle. His face was

black with anger. He gripped Malia, not by the arm, but by the

hair, and dragged her away behind him and was gone. Of that, even

now, can I understand not the half. I, who was for slaying Anapuni

because of her, raised neither hand nor voice of protest when

Konukalani dragged her away by the hair--nor did Anapuni. Of

course, we were common men, and he was a chief. That I know. But

why should two common men, mad with desire of woman, with desire of

woman stronger in them than desire of life, let any one chief, even

the highest in the land, drag the woman away by the hair? Desiring

her more than life, why should the two men fear to slay then and

immediately the one chief? Here is something stronger than life,

stronger than woman, but what is it? and why?"

"I will answer you," said Hardman Pool. "It is so because most men

are fools, and therefore must be taken care of by the few men who

are wise. Such is the secret of chiefship. In all the world are

chiefs over men. In all the world that has been have there ever

been chiefs, who must say to the many fool men: 'Do this; do not

do that. Work, and work as we tell you or your bellies will remain

empty and you will perish. Obey the laws we set you or you will be

beasts and without place in the world. You would not have been,

save for the chiefs before you who ordered and regulated for your

fathers. No seed of you will come after you, except that we order

and regulate for you now. You must be peace-abiding, and decent,

and blow your noses. You must be early to bed of nights, and up

early in the morning to work if you would heave beds to sleep in

and not roost in trees like the silly fowls. This is the season

for the yam-planting and you must plant now. We say now, to-day,

and not picnicking and hulaing to-day and yam-planting to-morrow or

some other day of the many careless days. You must not kill one

another, and you must leave your neighbours' wives alone. All this

is life for you, because you think but one day at a time, while we,

your chiefs, think for you all days and for days ahead.'"

"Like a cloud on the mountain-top that comes down and wraps about

you and that you dimly see is a cloud, so is your wisdom to me,

Kanaka Oolea," Kumuhana murmured. "Yet is it sad that I should be

born a common man and live all my days a common man."

"That is because you were of yourself common," Hardman Pool assured

him. "When a man is born common, and is by nature uncommon, he

rises up and overthrows the chiefs and makes himself chief over the

chiefs. Why do you not run my ranch, with its many thousands of

cattle, and shift the pastures by the rain-fall, and pick the

bulls, and arrange the bargaining and the selling of the meat to

the sailing ships and war vessels and the people who live in the

Honolulu houses, and fight with lawyers, and help make laws, and

even tell the King what is wise for him to do and what is

dangerous? Why does not any man do this that I do? Any man of all

the men who work for me, feed out of my hand, and let me do their

thinking for them--me, who work harder than any of them, who eats

no more than any of them, and who can sleep on no more than one

lauhala mat at a time like any of them?"

"I am out of the cloud, Kanaka Oolea," said Kumuhana, with a

visible brightening of countenance. "More clearly do I see. All

my long years have the aliis I was born under thought for me.

Ever, when I was hungry, I came to them for food, as I come to your

kitchen now. Many people eat in your kitchen, and the days of

feasts when you slay fat steers for all of us are understandable.

It is why I come to you this day, an old man whose labour of

strength is not worth a shilling a week, and ask of you twelve

dollars to buy a jackass and a second-hand saddle and bridle. It

is why twice ten fool men of us, under these monkey-pods half an

hour ago, asked of you a dollar or two, or four or five, or ten or

twelve. We are the careless ones of the careless days who will not

plant the yam in season if our alii does not compel us, who will

not think one day for ourselves, and who, when we age to

worthlessness, know that our alii will think kow-kow into our

bellies and a grass thatch over our heads.

Hardman Pool bowed his appreciation, and urged:

"But the bones of Kahekili. The Chief Konukalani had just dragged

away Malia by the hair of the head, and you and Anapuni sat on

without protest in the circle of drinking. What was it Malia

whispered in Anapuni's ear, bending over him, her hair hiding the

face of him?"

"That Kahekili was dead. That was what she whispered to Anapuni.

That Kahekili was dead, just dead, and that the chiefs, ordering

all within the house to remain within, were debating the disposal

of the bones and meat of him before word of his death should get

abroad. That the high priest Eoppo was deciding them, and that she

had overheard no less than Anapuni and me chosen as the sacrifices

to go the way of Kahekili and his bones and to care for him

afterward and for ever in the shadowy other world."

"The moepuu, the human sacrifice," Pool commented. "Yet it was

nine years since the coming of the missionaries."

"And it was the year before their coming that the idols were cast

down and the taboos broken," Kumuhana added. "But the chiefs still

practised the old ways, the custom of hunakele, and hid the bones

of the aliis where no men should find them and make fish-hooks of

their jaws or arrow heads of their long bones for the slaying of

little mice in sport. Behold, O Kanaka Oolea!"

The old man thrust out his tongue; and, to Pool's amazement, he saw

the surface of that sensitive organ, from root to tip, tattooed in

intricate designs.

"That was done after the missionaries came, several years

afterward, when Keopuolani died. Also, did I knock out four of my

front teeth, and half-circles did I burn over my body with blazing

bark. And whoever ventured out-of-doors that night was slain by

the chiefs. Nor could a light be shown in a house or a whisper of

noise be made. Even dogs and hogs that made a noise were slain,

nor all that night were the ships' bells of the haoles in the

harbour allowed to strike. It was a terrible thing in those days

when an alii died.

"But the night that Kahekili died. We sat on in the drinking

circle after Konukalani dragged Malia away by the hair. Some of

the haole sailors grumbled; but they were few in the land in those

days and the kanakas many. And never was Malia seen of men again.

Konukalani alone knew the manner of her slaying, and he never told.

And in after years what common men like Anapuni and me should dare

to question him?

"Now she had told Anapuni before she was dragged away. But

Anapuni's heart was black. Me he did not tell. Worthy he was of

the killing I had intended for him. There was a giant harpooner in

the circle, whose singing was like the bellowing of bulls; and,

gazing on him in amazement while he roared some song of the sea,

when next I looked across the circle to Anapuni, Anapuni was gone.

He had fled to the high mountains where he could hide with the

bird-catchers a week of moons. This I learned afterward.

"I? I sat on, ashamed of my desire of woman that had not been so

strong as my slave-obedience to a chief. And I drowned my shame in

large drinks of rum and whisky, till the world went round and

round, inside my head and out, and the Southern Cross danced a hula

in the sky, and the Koolau Mountains bowed their lofty summits to

Waikiki and the surf of Waikiki kissed them on their brows. And

the giant harpooner was still roaring, his the last sounds in my

ear, as I fell back on the lauhala mat, and was to all things for

the time as one dead.

"When I awoke was at the faint first beginning of dawn. I was

being kicked by a hard naked heel in the ribs. What of the

enormousness of the drink I had consumed, the feelings aroused in

me by the heel were not pleasant. The kanakas and wahines of the

drinking were gone. I alone remained among the sleeping sailormen,

the giant harpooner snoring like a whale, his head upon my feet.

"More heel-kicks, and I sat up and was sick. But the one who

kicked was impatient, and demanded to know where was Anapuni. And

I did not know, and was kicked, this time from both sides by two

impatient men, because I did not know. Nor did I know that

Kahekili was dead. Yet did I guess something serious was afoot,

for the two men who kicked me were chiefs, and no common men

crouched behind them to do their bidding. One was Aimoku, of

Kaneche; the other Humuhumu, of Manoa.

"They commanded me to go with them, and they were not kind in their

commanding; and as I uprose, the head of the giant harpooner was

rolled off my feet, past the edge of the mat, into the sand. He

grunted like a pig, his lips opened, and all of his tongue rolled

out of his mouth into the sand. Nor did he draw it back. For the

first time I knew how long was a man's tongue. The sight of the

sand on it made me sick for the second time. It is a terrible

thing, the next day after a night of drinking. I was afire, dry

afire, all the inside of me like a burnt cinder, like aa lava, like

the harpooner's tongue dry and gritty with sand. I bent for a

half-drunk drinking coconut, but Aimoku kicked it out of my shaking

fingers, and Humuhumu smote me with the heel of his hand on my

neck.

"They walked before me, side by side, their faces solemn and black,

and I walked at their heels. My mouth stank of the drink, and my

head was sick with the stale fumes of it, and I would have cut off

my right hand for a drink of water, one drink, a mouthful even.

And, had I had it, I know it would have sizzled in my belly like

water spilled on heated stones for the roasting. It is terrible,

the next day after the drinking. All the life-time of many men who

died young has passed by me since the last I was able to do such

mad drinking of youth when youth knows not capacity and is

undeterred.

"But as we went on, I began to know that some alii was dead. No

kanakas lay asleep in the sand, nor stole home from their love-

making; and no canoes were abroad after the early fish most

catchable then inside the reef at the change of the tide. When we

came, past the hoiau" (temple), "to where the Great Kamehameha used

to haul out his brigs and schooners, I saw, under the canoe-sheds,

that the mat-thatches of Kahekili's great double canoe had been

taken off, and that even then, at low tide, many men were launching

it down across the sand into the water. But all these men were

chiefs. And, though my eyes swam, and the inside of my head went

around and around, and the inside of my body was a cinder athirst,

I guessed that the alii who was dead was Kahekili. For he was old,

and most likely of the aliis to be dead."

"It was his death, as I have heard it, more than the intercession

of Kekuanaoa, that spoiled Governor Boki's rebellion," Hardman Pool

observed.

"It was Kahekili's death that spoiled it," Kumuhana confirmed.

"All commoners, when the word slipped out that night of his death,

fled into the shelter of the grass houses, nor lighted fire nor

pipes, nor breathed loudly, being therein and thereby taboo from

use for sacrifice. And all Governor Boki's commoners of fighting

men, as well as the haole deserters from ships, so fled, so that

the brass guns lay unserved and his handful of chiefs of themselves

could do nothing.

"Aimoku and Humuhumu made me sit on the sand to the side from the

launching of the great double-canoe. And when it was afloat all

the chiefs were athirst, not being used to such toil; and I was

told to climb the palms beside the canoe-sheds and throw down

drink-coconuts. They drank and were refreshed, but me they refused

to let drink.

"Then they bore Kahekili from his house to the canoe in a haole

coffin, oiled and varnished and new. It had been made by a ship's

carpenter, who thought he was making a boat that must not leak. It

was very tight, and over where the face of Kahekili lay was nothing

but thin glass. The chiefs had not screwed on the outside plank to

cover the glass. Maybe they did not know the manner of haole

coffins; but at any rate I was to be glad they did not know, as you

shall see.

"'There is but one moepuu,' said the priest Eoppo, looking at me

where I sat on the coffin in the bottom of the canoe. Already the

chiefs were paddling out through the reef.

"'The other has run into hiding,' Aimoku answered. 'This one was

all we could get.'

"And then I knew. I knew everything. I was to be sacrificed.

Anapuni had been planned for the other sacrifice. That was what

Malia had whispered to Anapuni at the drinking. And she had been

dragged away before she could tell me. And in his blackness of

heart he had not told me.

"'There should be two,' said Eoppo. 'It is the law.'

"Aimoku stopped paddling and looked back shoreward as if to return

and get a second sacrifice. But several of the chiefs contended

no, saying that all commoners were fled to the mountains or were

lying taboo in their houses, and that it might take days before

they could catch one. In the end Eoppo gave in, though he grumbled

from time to time that the law required two moepuus.

"We paddled on, past Diamond Head and abreast of Koko Head, till we

were in the midway of the Molokai Channel. There was quite a sea

running, though the trade wind was blowing light. The chiefs

rested from their paddles, save for the steersmen who kept the

canoes bow-on to the wind and swell. And, ere they proceeded

further in the matter, they opened more coconuts and drank.

"'I do not mind so much being the moepuu,' I said to Humuhumu; 'but

I should like to have a drink before I am slain.' I got no drink.

But I spoke true. I was too sick of the much whisky and rum to be

afraid to die. At least my mouth would stink no more, nor my head

ache, nor the inside of me be as dry-hot sand. Almost worst of

all, I suffered at thought of the harpooner's tongue, as last I had

seen it lying on the sand and covered with sand. O Kanaka Oolea,

what animals young men are with the drink! Not until they have

grown old, like you and me, do they control their wantonness of

thirst and drink sparingly, like you and me."

"Because we have to," Hardman Pool rejoined. "Old stomachs are

worn thin and tender, and we drink sparingly because we dare not

drink more. We are wise, but the wisdom is bitter."

"The priest Eoppo sang a long mele about Kahekili's mother and his

mother's mother, and all their mothers all the way back to the

beginning of time," Kumuhana resumed. "And it seemed I must die of

my sand-hot dryness ere he was done. And he called upon all the

gods of the under world, the middle world and the over world, to

care for and cherish the dead alii about to be consigned to them,

and to carry out the curses--they were terrible curses--he laid

upon all living men and men to live after who might tamper with the

bones of Kahekili to use them in sport of vermin-slaying.

"Do you know, Kanaka Oolea, the priest talked a language largely

different, and I know it was the priest language, the old language.

Maui he did not name Maui, but Maui-Tiki-Tiki and Maui-Po-Tiki.

And Hina, the goddess-mother of Maui, he named Ina. And Maui's

god-father he named sometimes Akalana and sometimes Kanaloa.

Strange how one about to die and very thirsty should remember such

things! And I remember the priest named Hawaii as Vaii, and Lanai

as Ngangai."

"Those were the Maori names," Hardman Pool explained, "and the

Samoan and Tongan names, that the priests brought with them in

their first voyages from the south in the long ago when they found

Hawaii and settled to dwell upon it."

"Great is your wisdom, O Kanaka Oolea," the old man accorded

solemnly. "Ku, our Supporter of the Heavens, the priest named Tu,

and also Ru; and La, our God of the Sun, he named Ra--"

"And Ra was a sun-god in Egypt in the long ago," Pool interrupted

with a sparkle of interest. "Truly, you Polynesians have travelled

far in time and space since first you began. A far cry it is from

Old Egypt, when Atlantis was still afloat, to Young Hawaii in the

North Pacific. But proceed, Kumuhana. Do you remember anything

also of what the priest Eoppo sang?"

"At the very end," came the confirming nod, "though I was near dead

myself, and nearer to die under the priest's knife, he sang what I

have remembered every word of. Listen! It was thus."

And in quavering falsetto, with the customary broken-notes, the old

man sang.

"A Maori death-chant unmistakable," Pool exclaimed, "sung by an

Hawaiian with a tattooed tongue! Repeat it once again, and I shall

say it to you in English."

And when it had been repeated, he spoke it slowly in English:

"But death is nothing new.

Death is and has been ever since old Maui died.

Then Pata-tai laughed loud

And woke the goblin-god,

Who severed him in two, and shut him in,

So dusk of eve came on."

"And at the last," Kumuhana resumed, "I was not slain. Eoppo, the

killing knife in hand and ready to lift for the blow, did not lift.

And I? How did I feel and think? Often, Kanaka Oolea, have I

since laughed at the memory of it. I felt very thirsty. I did not

want to die. I wanted a drink of water. I knew I was going to

die, and I kept remembering the thousand waterfalls falling to

waste down the pans" (precipices) "of the windward Koolau

Mountains. I did not think of Anapuni. I was too thirsty. I did

not think of Malia. I was too thirsty. But continually, inside my

head, I saw the tongue of the harpooner, covered dry with sand, as

I had last seen it, lying in the sand. My tongue was like that,

too. And in the bottom of the canoe rolled about many drinking

nuts. Yet I did not attempt to drink, for these were chiefs and I

was a common man.

"'No,' said Eoppo, commanding the chiefs to throw overboard the

coffin. 'There are not two moepuus, therefore there shall be

none.'

"'Slay the one,' the chiefs cried.

"But Eoppo shook his head, and said: 'We cannot send Kahekili on

his way with only the tops of the taro.'

"'Half a fish is better than none,' Aimoku said the old saying.

"'Not at the burying of an alii,' was the priest's quick reply.

'It is the law. We cannot be niggard with Kahekili and cut his

allotment of sacrifice in half.'

"So, for the moment, while the coffin went overside, I was not

slain. And it was strange that I was glad immediately that I was

to live. And I began to remember Malia, and to begin to plot a

vengeance on Anapuni. And with the blood of life thus freshening

in me, my thirst multiplied on itself tenfold and my tongue and

mouth and throat seemed as sanded as the tongue of the harpooner.

The coffin being overboard, I was sitting in the bottom of the

canoe. A coconut rolled between my legs and I closed them on it.

But as I picked it up in my hand, Aimoku smote my hand with the

paddle-edge. Behold!"

He held up the hand, showing two fingers crooked from never having

been set.

"I had no time to vex over my pain, for worse things were upon me.

All the chiefs were crying out in horror. The coffin, head-end up,

had not sunk. It bobbed up and down in the sea astern of us. And

the canoe, without way on it, bow-on to sea and wind, was drifted

down by sea and wind upon the coffin. And the glass of it was to

us, so that we could see the face and head of Kahekili through the

glass; and he grinned at us through the glass and seemed alive

already in the other world and angry with us, and, with other-world

power, about to wreak his anger upon us. Up and down he bobbed,

and the canoe drifted closer upon him.

"'Kill him!' 'Bleed him!' 'Thrust to the heart of him!' These

things the chiefs were crying out to Eoppo in their fear. 'Over

with the taro tops!' 'Let the alii have the half of a fish!'

"Eoppo, priest though he was, was likewise afraid, and his reason

weakened before the sight of Kahekili in his haole coffin that

would not sink. He seized me by the hair, drew me to my feet, and

lifted the knife to plunge to my heart. And there was no

resistance in me. I knew again only that I was very thirsty, and

before my swimming eyes, in mid-air and close up, dangled the

sanded tongue of the harpooner.

"But before the knife could fall and drive in, the thing happened

that saved me. Akai, half-brother to Governor Boki, as you will

remember, was steersman of the canoe, and, therefore, in the stern,

was nearest to the coffin and its dead that would not sink. He was

wild with fear, and he thrust out with the point of his paddle to

fend off the coffined alii that seemed bent to come on board. The

point of the paddle struck the glass. The glass broke--"

"And the coffin immediately sank," Hardman Pool broke in; "the air

that floated it escaping through the broken glass."

"The coffin immediately sank, being builded by the ship's carpenter

like a boat," Kumuhana confirmed. "And I, who was a moepuu, became

a man once more. And I lived, though I died a thousand deaths from

thirst before we gained back to the beach at Waikiki.

"And so, O Kanaka Oolea, the bones of Kahekili do not lie in the

Royal Mausoleum. They are at the bottom of Molokai Channel, if

not, long since, they have become floating dust of slime, or,

builded into the bodies of the coral creatures dead and gone, are

builded into the coral reef itself. Of men I am the one living who

saw the bones of Kahekili sink into the Molokai Channel."

In the pause that followed, wherein Hardman Pool was deep sunk in

meditation, Kumuhana licked his dry lips many times. At the last

he broke silence:

"The twelve dollars, Kanaka Oolea, for the jackass and the second-

hand saddle and bridle?"

"The twelve dollars would be thine," Pool responded, passing to the

ancient one six dollars and a half, "save that I have in my stable

junk the very bridle and saddle for you which I shall give you.

These six dollars and a half will buy you the perfectly suitable

jackass of the pake" (Chinese) "at Kokako who told me only

yesterday that such was the price."

They sat on, Pool meditating, conning over and over to himself the

Maori death-chant he had heard, and especially the line, "So dusk

of eve came on," finding in it an intense satisfaction of beauty;

Kumuhana licking his lips and tokening that he waited for something

more. At last he broke silence.

"I have talked long, O Kanaka Oolea. There is not the enduring

moistness in my mouth that was when I was young. It seems that

afresh upon me is the thirst that was mine when tormented by the

visioned tongue of the harpooner. The gin and milk is very good, O

Kanaka Oolea, for a tongue that is like the harpooner's."

A shadow of a smile flickered across Pool's face. He clapped his

hands, and the little maid came running.

"Bring one glass of gin and milk for old Kumuhana," commanded

Hardman Pool.

WAIKIKI, HONOLULU

June 28, 1916.

WHEN ALICE TOLD HER SOUL

This, of Alice Akana, is an affair of Hawaii, not of this day, but

of days recent enough, when Abel Ah Yo preached his famous revival

in Honolulu and persuaded Alice Akana to tell her soul. But what

Alice told concerned itself with the earlier history of the then

surviving generation.

For Alice Akana was fifty years old, had begun life early, and,

early and late, lived it spaciously. What she knew went back into

the roots and foundations of families, businesses, and plantations.

She was the one living repository of accurate information that

lawyers sought out, whether the information they required related

to land-boundaries and land gifts, or to marriages, births,

bequests, or scandals. Rarely, because of the tight tongue she

kept behind her teeth, did she give them what they asked; and when

she did was when only equity was served and no one was hurt.

For Alice had lived, from early in her girlhood, a life of flowers,

and song, and wine, and dance; and, in her later years, had herself

been mistress of these revels by office of mistress of the hula

house. In such atmosphere, where mandates of God and man and

caution are inhibited, and where woozled tongues will wag, she

acquired her historical knowledge of things never otherwise

whispered and rarely guessed. And her tight tongue had served her

well, so that, while the old-timers knew she must know, none ever

heard her gossip of the times of Kalakaua's boathouse, nor of the

high times of officers of visiting warships, nor of the diplomats

and ministers and councils of the countries of the world.

So, at fifty, loaded with historical dynamite sufficient, if it

were ever exploded, to shake the social and commercial life of the

Islands, still tight of tongue, Alice Akana was mistress of the

hula house, manageress of the dancing girls who hula'd for royalty,

for luaus (feasts), house-parties, poi suppers, and curious

tourists. And, at fifty, she was not merely buxom, but short and

fat in the Polynesian peasant way, with a constitution and lack of

organic weakness that promised incalculable years. But it was at

fifty that she strayed, quite by chance of time and curiosity, into

Abel Ah Yo's revival meeting.

Now Abel Ah Yo, in his theology and word wizardry, was as much

mixed a personage as Billy Sunday. In his genealogy he was much

more mixed, for he was compounded of one-fourth Portuguese, one-

fourth Scotch, one-fourth Hawaiian, and one-fourth Chinese. The

Pentecostal fire he flamed forth was hotter and more variegated

than could any one of the four races of him alone have flamed

forth. For in him were gathered together the cannyness and the

cunning, the wit and the wisdom, the subtlety and the rawness, the

passion and the philosophy, the agonizing spirit-groping and he

legs up to the knees in the dung of reality, of the four radically

different breeds that contributed to the sum of him. His, also,

was the clever self-deceivement of the entire clever compound.

When it came to word wizardry, he had Billy Sunday, master of slang

and argot of one language, skinned by miles. For in Abel Ah Yo

were the five verbs, and nouns, and adjectives, and metaphors of

four living languages. Intermixed and living promiscuously and

vitally together, he possessed in these languages a reservoir of

expression in which a myriad Billy Sundays could drown. Of no

race, a mongrel par excellence, a heterogeneous scrabble, the

genius of the admixture was superlatively Abel Ah Yo's. Like a

chameleon, he titubated and scintillated grandly between the

diverse parts of him, stunning by frontal attack and surprising and

confouding by flanking sweeps the mental homogeneity of the more

simply constituted souls who came in to his revival to sit under

him and flame to his flaming.

Abel Ah Yo believed in himself and his mixedness, as he believed in

the mixedness of his weird concept that God looked as much like him

as like any man, being no mere tribal god, but a world god that

must look equally like all races of all the world, even if it led

to piebaldness. And the concept worked. Chinese, Korean,

Japanese, Hawaiian, Porto Rican, Russian, English, French--members

of all races--knelt without friction, side by side, to his revision

of deity.

Himself in his tender youth an apostate to the Church of England,

Abel Ah Yo had for years suffered the lively sense of being a Judas

sinner. Essentially religious, he had foresworn the Lord. Like

Judas therefore he was. Judas was damned. Wherefore he, Abel Ah

Yo, was damned; and he did not want to be damned. So, quite after

the manner of humans, he squirmed and twisted to escape damnation.

The day came when he solved his escape. The doctrine that Judas

was damned, he concluded, was a misinterpretation of God, who,

above all things, stood for justice. Judas had been God's servant,

specially selected to perform a particularly nasty job. Therefore

Judas, ever faithful, a betrayer only by divine command, was a

saint. Ergo, he, Abel Ah Yo, was a saint by very virtue of his

apostasy to a particular sect, and he could have access with clear

grace any time to God.

This theory became one of the major tenets of his preaching, and

was especially efficacious in cleansing the consciences of the

back-sliders from all other faiths who else, in the secrecy of

their subconscious selves, were being crushed by the weight of the

Judas sin. To Abel Ah Yo, God's plan was as clear as if he, Abel

Ah Yo, had planned it himself. All would be saved in the end,

although some took longer than others, and would win only to

backseats. Man's place in the ever-fluxing chaos of the world was

definite and pre-ordained--if by no other token, then by denial

that there was any ever-fluxing chaos. This was a mere bugbear of

mankind's addled fancy; and, by stinging audacities of thought and

speech, by vivid slang that bit home by sheerest intimacy into his

listeners' mental processes, he drove the bugbear from their

brains, showed them the loving clarity of God's design, and,

thereby, induced in them spiritual serenity and calm.

What chance had Alice Akana, herself pure and homogeneous Hawaiian,

against his subtle, democratic-tinged, four-race-engendered, slang-

munitioned attack? He knew, by contact, almost as much as she

about the waywardness of living and sinning--having been singing

boy on the passenger-ships between Hawaii and California, and,

after that, bar boy, afloat and ashore, from the Barbary Coast to

Heinie's Tavern. In point of fact, he had left his job of Number

One Bar Boy at the University Club to embark on his great

preachment revival.

So, when Alice Akana strayed in to scoff, she remained to pray to

Abel Ah Yo's god, who struck her hard-headed mind as the most

sensible god of which she had ever heard. She gave money into Abel

Ah Yo's collection plate, closed up the hula house, and dismissed

the hula dancers to more devious ways of earning a livelihood, shed

her bright colours and raiments and flower garlands, and bought a

Bible.

It was a time of religious excitement in the purlieus of Honolulu.

The thing was a democratic movement of the people toward God.

Place and caste were invited, but never came. The stupid lowly,

and the humble lowly, only, went down on its knees at the penitent

form, admitted its pathological weight and hurt of sin, eliminated

and purged all its bafflements, and walked forth again upright

under the sun, child-like and pure, upborne by Abel Ah Yo's god's

arm around it. In short, Abel Ah Yo's revival was a clearing house

for sin and sickness of spirit, wherein sinners were relieved of

their burdens and made light and bright and spiritually healthy

again.

But Alice was not happy. She had not been cleared. She bought and

dispersed Bibles, contributed more money to the plate, contralto'd

gloriously in all the hymns, but would not tell her soul. In vain

Abel Ah Yo wrestled with her. She would not go down on her knees

at the penitent form and voice the things of tarnish within her--

the ill things of good friends of the old days. "You cannot serve

two masters," Abel Ah Yo told her. "Hell is full of those who have

tried. Single of heart and pure of heart must you make your peace

with God. Not until you tell your soul to God right out in meeting

will you be ready for redemption. In the meantime you will suffer

the canker of the sin you carry about within you."

Scientifically, though he did not know it and though he continually

jeered at science, Abel Ah Yo was right. Not could she be again as

a child and become radiantly clad in God's grace, until she had

eliminated from her soul, by telling, all the sophistications that

had been hers, including those she shared with others. In the

Protestant way, she must bare her soul in public, as in the

Catholic way it was done in the privacy of the confessional. The

result of such baring would be unity, tranquillity, happiness,

cleansing, redemption, and immortal life.

"Choose!" Abel Ah Yo thundered. "Loyalty to God, or loyalty to

man." And Alice could not choose. Too long had she kept her

tongue locked with the honour of man. "I will tell all my soul

about myself," she contended. "God knows I am tired of my soul and

should like to have it clean and shining once again as when I was a

little girl at Kaneohe--"

"But all the corruption of your soul has been with other souls,"

was Abel Ah Yo's invariable reply. "When you have a burden, lay it

down. You cannot bear a burden and be quit of it at the same

time."

"I will pray to God each day, and many times each day," she urged.

"I will approach God with humility, with sighs and with tears. I

will contribute often to the plate, and I will buy Bibles, Bibles,

Bibles without end."

"And God will not smile upon you," God's mouthpiece retorted. "And

you will remain weary and heavy-laden. For you will not have told

all your sin, and not until you have told all will you be rid of

any."

"This rebirth is difficult," Alice sighed.

"Rebirth is even more difficult than birth." Abel Ah Yo did

anything but comfort her. "'Not until you become as a little child

. . . '"

"If ever I tell my soul, it will be a big telling," she confided.

"The bigger the reason to tell it then."

And so the situation remained at deadlock, Abel Ah Yo demanding

absolute allegiance to God, and Alice Akana flirting on the fringes

of paradise.

"You bet it will be a big telling, if Alice ever begins," the

beach-combing and disreputable kamaainas (old-timers) gleefully

told one another over their Palm Tree gin.

In the clubs the possibility of her telling was of more moment.

The younger generation of men announced that they had applied for

front seats at the telling, while many of the older generation of

men joked hollowly about the conversion of Alice. Further, Alice

found herself abruptly popular with friends who had forgotten her

existence for twenty years.

One afternoon, as Alice, Bible in hand, was taking the electric

street car at Hotel and Fort, Cyrus Hodge, sugar factor and

magnate, ordered his chauffeur to stop beside her. Willy nilly, in

excess of friendliness, he had her into his limousine beside him

and went three-quarters of an hour out of his way and time

personally to conduct her to her destination.

"Good for sore eyes to see you," he burbled. "How the years fly!

You're looking fine. The secret of youth is yours."

Alice smiled and complimented in return in the royal Polynesian way

of friendliness.

"My, my," Cyrus Hodge reminisced. "I was such a boy in those

days!"

"SOME boy," she laughed acquiescence.

"But knowing no more than the foolishness of a boy in those long-

ago days."

"Remember the night your hack-driver got drunk and left you--"

"S-s-sh!" he cautioned. "That Jap driver is a high-school graduate

and knows more English than either of us. Also, I think he is a

spy for his Government. So why should we tell him anything?

Besides, I was so very young. You remember . . . "

"Your cheeks were like the peaches we used to grow before the

Mediterranean fruit fly got into them," Alice agreed. "I don't

think you shaved more than once a week then. You were a pretty

boy. Don't you remember the hula we composed in your honour, the--

"

"S-s-sh!" he hushed her. "All that's buried and forgotten. May it

remain forgotten."

And she was aware that in his eyes was no longer any of the

ingenuousness of youth she remembered. Instead, his eyes were keen

and speculative, searching into her for some assurance that she

would not resurrect his particular portion of that buried past.

"Religion is a good thing for us as we get along into middle age,"

another old friend told her. He was building a magnificent house

on Pacific Heights, but had recently married a second time, and was

even then on his way to the steamer to welcome home his two

daughters just graduated from Vassar. "We need religion in our old

age, Alice. It softens, makes us more tolerant and forgiving of

the weaknesses of others--especially the weaknesses of youth of--of

others, when they played high and low and didn't know what they

were doing."

He waited anxiously.

"Yes," she said. "We are all born to sin and it is hard to grow

out of sin. But I grow, I grow."

"Don't forget, Alice, in those other days I always played square.

You and I never had a falling out."

"Not even the night you gave that luau when you were twenty-one and

insisted on breaking the glassware after every toast. But of

course you paid for it."

"Handsomely," he asserted almost pleadingly.

"Handsomely," she agreed. "I replaced more than double the

quantity with what you paid me, so that at the next luau I catered

one hundred and twenty plates without having to rent or borrow a

dish or glass. Lord Mainweather gave that luau--you remember him."

"I was pig-sticking with him at Mana," the other nodded. "We were

at a two weeks' house-party there. But say, Alice, as you know, I

think this religion stuff is all right and better than all right.

But don't let it carry you off your feet. And don't get to telling

your soul on me. What would my daughters think of that broken

glassware!"

"I always did have an aloha" (warm regard) "for you, Alice," a

member of the Senate, fat and bald-headed, assured her.

And another, a lawyer and a grandfather: "We were always friends,

Alice. And remember, any legal advice or handling of business you

may require, I'll do for you gladly, and without fees, for the sake

of our old-time friendship."

Came a banker to her late Christmas Eve, with formidable, legal-

looking envelopes in his hand which he presented to her.

"Quite by chance," he explained, "when my people were looking up

land-records in Iapio Valley, I found a mortgage of two thousand on

your holdings there--that rice land leased to Ah Chin. And my mind

drifted back to the past when we were all young together, and wild-

-a bit wild, to be sure. And my heart warmed with the memory of

you, and, so, just as an aloha, here's the whole thing cleared off

for you."

Nor was Alice forgotten by her own people. Her house became a

Mecca for native men and women, usually performing pilgrimage

privily after darkness fell, with presents always in their hands--

squid fresh from the reef, opihis and limu, baskets of alligator

pears, roasting corn of the earliest from windward Cahu, mangoes

and star-apples, taro pink and royal of the finest selection,

sucking pigs, banana poi, breadfruit, and crabs caught the very day

from Pearl Harbour. Mary Mendana, wife of the Portuguese Consul,

remembered her with a five-dollar box of candy and a mandarin coat

that would have fetched three-quarters of a hundred dollars at a

fire sale. And Elvira Miyahara Makaena Yin Wap, the wife of Yin

Wap the wealthy Chinese importer, brought personally to Alice two

entire bolts of pina cloth from the Philippines and a dozen pairs

of silk stockings.

The time passed, and Abel Ah Yo struggled with Alice for a properly

penitent heart, and Alice struggled with herself for her soul,

while half of Honolulu wickedly or apprehensively hung on the

outcome. Carnival week was over, polo and the races had come and

gone, and the celebration of Fourth of July was ripening, ere Abel

Ah Yo beat down by brutal psychology the citadel of her reluctance.

It was then that he gave his famous exhortation which might be

summed up as Abel Ah Yo's definition of eternity. Of course, like

Billy Sunday on certain occasions, Abel Ah Yo had cribbed the

definition. But no one in the Islands knew it, and his rating as a

revivalist uprose a hundred per cent.

So successful was his preaching that night, that he reconverted

many of his converts, who fell and moaned about the penitent form

and crowded for room amongst scores of new converts burnt by the

pentecostal fire, including half a company of negro soldiers from

the garrisoned Twenty-Fifth Infantry, a dozen troopers from the

Fourth Cavalry on its way to the Philippines, as many drunken man-

of-war's men, divers ladies from Iwilei, and half the riff-raff of

the beach.

Abel Ah Yo, subtly sympathetic himself by virtue of his racial

admixture, knowing human nature like a book and Alice Akana even

more so, knew just what he was doing when he arose that memorable

night and exposited God, hell, and eternity in terms of Alice

Akana's comprehension. For, quite by chance, he had discovered her

cardinal weakness. First of all, like all Polynesians, an ardent

lover of nature, he found that earthquake and volcanic eruption

were the things of which Alice lived in terror. She had been, in

the past, on the Big Island, through cataclysms that had slacken

grass houses down upon her while she slept, and she had beheld

Madame Pele (the Fire or Volcano Goddess) fling red-fluxing lava

down the long slopes of Mauna Loa, destroying fish-ponds on the

sea-brim and licking up droves of beef cattle, villages, and humans

on her fiery way.

The night before, a slight earthquake had shaken Honolulu and given

Alice Akana insomnia. And the morning papers had stated that Mauna

Kea had broken into eruption, while the lava was rising rapidly in

the great pit of Kilauea. So, at the meeting, her mind vexed

between the terrors of this world and the delights of the eternal

world to come, Alice sat down in a front seat in a very definite

state of the "jumps."

And Abel Ah Yo arose and put his finger on the sorest part of her

soul. Sketching the nature of God in the stereotyped way, but

making the stereotyped alive again with his gift of tongues in

Pidgin-English and Pidgin-Hawaiian, Abel Ah Yo described the day

when the Lord, even His infinite patience at an end, would tell

Peter to close his day book and ledgers, command Gabriel to summon

all souls to Judgment, and cry out with a voice of thunder:

"Welakahao!"

This anthromorphic deity of Abel Ah Yo thundering the modern

Hawaiian-English slang of welakahao at the end of the world, is a

fair sample of the revivalist's speech-tools of discourse.

Welakahao means literally "hot iron." It was coined in the

Honolulu Iron-works by the hundreds of Hawaiian men there employed,

who meant by it "to hustle," "to get a move on," the iron being hot

meaning that the time had come to strike.

"And the Lord cried 'Welakahao,' and the Day of Judgment began and

was over wiki-wiki" (quickly) "just like that; for Peter was a

better bookkeeper than any on the Waterhouse Trust Company Limited,

and, further, Peter's books were true."

Swiftly Abel Ah Yo divided the sheep from the goats, and hastened

the latter down into hell.

"And now," he demanded, perforce his language on these pages being

properly Englished, "what is hell like? Oh, my friends, let me

describe to you, in a little way, what I have beheld with my own

eves on earth of the possibilities of hell. I was a young man, a

boy, and I was at Hilo. Morning began with earthquakes.

Throughout the day the mighty land continued to shake and tremble,

till strong men became seasick, and women clung to trees to escape

falling, and cattle were thrown down off their feet. I beheld

myself a young calf so thrown. A night of terror indescribable

followed. The land was in motion like a canoe in a Kona gale.

There was an infant crushed to death by its fond mother stepping

upon it whilst fleeing her falling house.

"The heavens were on fire above us. We read our Bibles by the

light of the heavens, and the print was fine, even for young eyes.

Those missionary Bibles were always too small of print. Forty

miles away from us, the heart of hell burst from the lofty

mountains and gushed red-blood of fire-melted rock toward the sea.

With the heavens in vast conflagration and the earth hulaing

beneath our feet, was a scene too awful and too majestic to be

enjoyed. We could think only of the thin bubble-skin of earth

between us and the everlasting lake of fire and brimstone, and of

God to whom we prayed to save us. There were earnest and devout

souls who there and then promised their pastors to give not their

shaved tithes, but five-tenths of their all to the church, if only

the Lord would let them live to contribute.

"Oh, my friends, God saved us. But first he showed us a foretaste

of that hell that will yawn for us on the last day, when he cries

'Welakahao!' in a voice of thunder. When the iron is hot! Think

of it! When the iron is hot for sinners!

"By the third day, things being much quieter, my friend the

preacher and I, being calm in the hand of God, journeyed up Mauna

Loa and gazed into the awful pit of Kilauea. We gazed down into

the fathomless abyss to the lake of fire far below, roaring and

dashing its fiery spray into billows and fountaining hundreds of

feet into the air like Fourth of July fireworks you have all seen,

and all the while we were suffocating and made dizzy by the immense

volumes of smoke and brimstone ascending.

"And I say unto you, no pious person could gaze down upon that

scene without recognizing fully the Bible picture of the Pit of

Hell. Believe me, the writers of the New Testament had nothing on

us. As for me, my eyes were fixed upon the exhibition before me,

and I stood mute and trembling under a sense never before so fully

realized of the power, the majesty, and terror of Almighty God--the

resources of His wrath, and the untold horrors of the finally

impenitent who do not tell their souls and make their peace with

the Creator. {1}

"But oh, my friends, think you our guides, our native attendants,

deep-sunk in heathenism, were affected by such a scene? No. The

devil's hand was upon them. Utterly regardless and unimpressed,

they were only careful about their supper, chatted about their raw

fish, and stretched themselves upon their mats to sleep. Children

of the devil they were, insensible to the beauties, the

sublimities, and the awful terror of God's works. But you are not

heathen I now address. What is a heathen? He is one who betrays a

stupid insensibility to every elevated idea and to every elevated

emotion. If you wish to awaken his attention, do not bid him to

look down into the Pit of Hell. But present him with a calabash of

poi, a raw fish, or invite him to some low, grovelling, and

sensuous sport. Oh, my friends, how lost are they to all that

elevates the immortal soul! But the preacher and I, sad and sick

at heart for them, gazed down into hell. Oh, my friends, it WAS

hell, the hell of the Scriptures, the hell of eternal torment for

the undeserving . . . "

Alice Akana was in an ecstasy or hysteria of terror. She was

mumbling incoherently: "O Lord, I will give nine-tenths of my all.

I will give all. I will give even the two bolts of pina cloth, the

mandarin coat, and the entire dozen silk stockings . . . "

By the time she could lend ear again, Abel Ah Yo was launching out

on his famous definition of eternity.

"Eternity is a long time, my friends. God lives, and, therefore,

God lives inside eternity. And God is very old. The fires of hell

are as old and as everlasting as God. How else could there be

everlasting torment for those sinners cast down by God into the Pit

on the Last Day to burn for ever and for ever through all eternity?

Oh, my friends, your minds are small--too small to grasp eternity.

Yet is it given to me, by God's grace, to convey to you an

understanding of a tiny bit of eternity.

"The grains of sand on the beach of Waikiki are as many as the

stars, and more. No man may count them. Did he have a million

lives in which to count them, he would have to ask for more time.

Now let us consider a little, dinky, old minah bird with one broken

wing that cannot fly. At Waikiki the minah bird that cannot fly

takes one grain of sand in its beak and hops, hops, all day lone

and for many days, all the day to Pearl Harbour and drops that one

grain of sand into the harbour. Then it hops, hops, all day and

for many days, all the way back to Waikiki for another grain of

sand. And again it hops, hops all the way back to Pearl Harbour.

And it continues to do this through the years and centuries, and

the thousands and thousands of centuries, until, at last, there

remains not one grain of sand at Waikiki and Pearl Harbour is

filled up with land and growing coconuts and pine-apples. And

then, oh my friends, even then, IT WOULD NOT YET BE SUNRISE IN

HELL!

Here, at the smashing impact of so abrupt a climax, unable to

withstand the sheer simplicity and objectivity of such artful

measurement of a trifle of eternity, Alice Akana's mind broke down

and blew up. She uprose, reeled blindly, and stumbled to her knees

at the penitent form. Abel Ah Yo had not finished his preaching,

but it was his gift to know crowd psychology, and to feel the heat

of the pentecostal conflagration that scorched his audience. He

called for a rousing revival hymn from his singers, and stepped

down to wade among the hallelujah-shouting negro soldiers to Alice

Akana. And, ere the excitement began to ebb, nine-tenths of his

congregation and all his converts were down on knees and praying

and shouting aloud an immensity of contriteness and sin.

Word came, via telephone, almost simultaneously to the Pacific and

University Clubs, that at last Alice was telling her soul in

meeting; and, by private machine and taxi-cab, for the first time

Abel Ah Yo's revival was invaded by those of caste and place. The

first comers beheld the curious sight of Hawaiian, Chinese, and all

variegated racial mixtures of the smelting-pot of Hawaii, men and

women, fading out and slinking away through the exits of Abel Ah

Yo's tabernacle. But those who were sneaking out were mostly men,

while those who remained were avid-faced as they hung on Alice's

utterance.

Never was a more fearful and damning community narrative enunciated

in the entire Pacific, north and south, than that enunciated by

Alice Akana; the penitent Phryne of Honolulu.

"Huh!" the first comers heard her saying, having already disposed

of most of the venial sins of the lesser ones of her memory. "You

think this man, Stephen Makekau, is the son of Moses Makekau and

Minnie Ah Ling, and has a legal right to the two hundred and eight

dollars he draws down each month from Parke Richards Limited, for

the lease of the fish-pond to Bill Kong at Amana. Not so. Stephen

Makekau is not the son of Moses. He is the son of Aaron Kama and

Tillie Naone. He was given as a present, as a feeding child, to

Moses and Minnie, by Aaron and Tillie. I know. Moses and Minnie

and Aaron and Tillie are dead. Yet I know and can prove it. Old

Mrs. Poepoe is still alive. I was present when Stephen was born,

and in the night-time, when he was two months old, I myself carried

him as a present to Moses and Minnie, and old Mrs. Poepoe carried

the lantern. This secret has been one of my sins. It has kept me

from God. Now I am free of it. Young Archie Makekau, who collects

bills for the Gas Company and plays baseball in the afternoons, and

drinks too much gin, should get that two hundred and eight dollars

the first of each month from Parke Richards Limited. He will blow

it in on gin and a Ford automobile. Stephen is a good man. Archie

is no good. Also he is a liar, and he has served two sentences on

the reef, and was in reform school before that. Yet God demands

the truth, and Archie will get the money and make a bad use of it."

And in such fashion Alice rambled on through the experiences of her

long and full-packed life. And women forgot they were in the

tabernacle, and men too, and faces darkened with passion as they

learned for the first time the long-buried secrets of their other

halves.

"The lawyers' offices will be crowded to-morrow morning,"

MacIlwaine, chief of detectives, paused long enough from storing

away useful information to lean and mutter in Colonel Stilton's

ear.

Colonel Stilton grinned affirmation, although the chief of

detectives could not fail to note the ghastliness of the grin.

"There is a banker in Honolulu. You all know his name. He is 'way

up, swell society because of his wife. He owns much stock in

General Plantations and Inter-Island."

MacIlwaine recognized the growing portrait and forbore to chuckle.

"His name is Colonel Stilton. Last Christmas Eve he came to my

house with big aloha" (love) "and gave me mortgages on my land in

Iapio Valley, all cancelled, for two thousand dollars' worth. Now

why did he have such big cash aloha for me? I will tell you . . .

"

And tell she did, throwing the searchlight on ancient business

transactions and political deals which from their inception had

lurked in the dark.

"This," Alice concluded the episode, "has long been a sin upon my

conscience, and kept my heart from God.

"And Harold Miles was that time President of the Senate, and next

week he bought three town lots at Pearl Harbour, and painted his

Honolulu house, and paid up his back dues in his clubs. Also the

Ramsay home at Honokiki was left by will to the people if the

Government would keep it up. But if the Government, after two

years, did not begin to keep it up, then would it go to the Ramsay

heirs, whom old Ramsay hated like poison. Well, it went to the

heirs all right. Their lawyer was Charley Middleton, and he had me

help fix it with the Government men. And their names were . . . "

Six names, from both branches of the Legislature, Alice recited,

and added: "Maybe they all painted their houses after that. For

the first time have I spoken. My heart is much lighter and softer.

It has been coated with an armour of house-paint against the Lord.

And there is Harry Werther. He was in the Senate that time.

Everybody said bad things about him, and he was never re-elected.

Yet his house was not painted. He was honest. To this day his

house is not painted, as everybody knows.

"There is Jim Lokendamper. He has a bad heart. I heard him, only

last week, right here before you all, tell his soul. He did not

tell all his soul, and he lied to God. I am not lying to God. It

is a big telling, but I am telling everything. Now Azalea Akau,

sitting right over there, is his wife. But Lizzie Lokendamper is

his married wife. A long time ago he had the great aloha for

Azalea. You think her uncle, who went to California and died, left

her by will that two thousand five hundred dollars she got. Her

uncle did not. I know. Her uncle cried broke in California, and

Jim Lokendamper sent eighty dollars to California to bury him. Jim

Lokendamper had a piece of land in Kohala he got from his mother's

aunt. Lizzie, his married wife, did not know this. So he sold it

to the Kohala Ditch Company and wave the twenty-five hundred to

Azalea Akau--"

Here, Lizzie, the married wife, upstood like a fury long-thwarted,

and, in lieu of her husband, already fled, flung herself tooth and

nail on Azalea.

"Wait, Lizzie Lokendamper!" Alice cried out. "I have much weight

of you on my heart and some house-paint too . . . "

And when she had finished her disclosure of how Lizzie had painted

her house, Azalea was up and raging.

"Wait, Azalea Akau. I shall now lighten my heart about you. And

it is not house-paint. Jim always paid that. It is your new bath-

tub and modern plumbing that is heavy on me . . . "

Worse, much worse, about many and sundry, did Alice Akana have to

say, cutting high in business, financial, and social life, as well

as low. None was too high nor too low to escape; and not until two

in the morning, before an entranced audience that packed the

tabernacle to the doors, did she complete her recital of the

personal and detailed iniquities she knew of the community in which

she had lived intimately all her days. Just as she was finishing,

she remembered more.

"Huh!" she sniffed. "I gave last week one lot worth eight hundred

dollars cash market price to Abel Ah Yo to pay running expenses and

add up in Peter's books in heaven. Where did I get that lot? You

all think Mr. Fleming Jason is a good man. He is more crooked than

the entrance was to Pearl Lochs before the United States Government

straightened the channel. He has liver disease now; but his

sickness is a judgment of God, and he will die crooked. Mr.

Fleming Jason gave me that lot twenty-two years ago, when its cash

market price was thirty-five dollars. Because his aloha for me was

big? No. He never had aloha inside of him except for dollars.

"You listen. Mr. Fleming Jason put a great sin upon me. When

Frank Lomiloli was at my house, full of gin, for which gin Mr.

Fleming Jason paid me in advance five times over, I got Frank

Lomiloli to sign his name to the sale paper of his town land for

one hundred dollars. It was worth six hundred then. It is worth

twenty thousand now. Maybe you want to know where that town land

is. I will tell you and remove it off my heart. It is on King

Street, where is now the Come Again Saloon, the Japanese Taxicab

Company garage, the Smith & Wilson plumbing shop, and the Ambrosia

lee Cream Parlours, with the two more stories big Addison Lodging

House overhead. And it is all wood, and always has been well

painted. Yesterday they started painting it attain. But that

paint will not stand between me and God. There are no more paint

pots between me and my path to heaven."

The morning and evening papers of the day following held an unholy

hush on the greatest news story of years; but Honolulu was half a-

giggle and half aghast at the whispered reports, not always basely

exaggerated, that circulated wherever two Honoluluans chanced to

meet.

"Our mistake," said Colonel Chilton, at the club, "was that we did

not, at the very first, appoint a committee of safety to keep track

of Alice's soul."

Bob Cristy, one of the younger islanders, burst into laughter, so

pointed and so loud that the meaning of it was demanded.

"Oh, nothing much," was his reply. "But I heard, on my way here,

that old John Ward had just been run in for drunken and disorderly

conduct and for resisting an officer. Now Abel Ah Yo fine-

toothcombs the police court. He loves nothing better than soul-

snatching a chronic drunkard."

Colonel Chilton looked at Lask Finneston, and both looked at Gary

Wilkinson. He returned to them a similar look.

"The old beachcomber!" Lask Finneston cried. "The drunken old

reprobate! I'd forgotten he was alive. Wonderful constitution.

Never drew a sober breath except when he was shipwrecked, and, when

I remember him, into every deviltry afloat. He must be going on

eighty."

"He isn't far away from it," Bob Cristy nodded. "Still beach-

combs, drinks when he gets the price, and keeps all his senses,

though he's not spry and has to use glasses when he reads. And his

memory is perfect. Now if Abel Ah Yo catches him . . . "

Gary Wilkinson cleared his throat preliminary to speech.

"Now there's a grand old man," he said. "A left-over from a

forgotten age. Few of his type remain. A pioneer. A true

kamaaina" (old-timer). "Helpless and in the hands of the police in

his old age! We should do something for him in recognition of his

yeoman work in Hawaii. His old home, I happen to know, is Sag

Harbour. He hasn't seen it for over half a century. Now why

shouldn't he be surprised to-morrow morning by having his fine

paid, and by being presented with return tickets to Sag Harbour,

and, say, expenses for a year's trip? I move a committee. I

appoint Colonel Chilton, Lask Finneston, and . . . and myself. As

for chairman, who more appropriate than Lask Finneston, who knew

the old gentleman so well in the early days? Since there is no

objection, I hereby appoint Lask Finneston chairman of the

committee for the purpose of raising and donating money to pay the

police-court fine and the expenses of a year's travel for that

noble pioneer, John Ward, in recognition of a lifetime of devotion

of energy to the upbuilding of Hawaii."

There was no dissent.

"The committee will now go into secret session," said Lask

Finneston, arising and indicating the way to the library.

GLEN ELLEN, CALIFORNIA,

August 30, 1916.

SHIN-BONES

They have gone down to the pit with their weapons of war, and they

have laid their swords under their heads.

"It was a sad thing to see the old lady revert."

Prince Akuli shot an apprehensive glance sideward to where, under

the shade of a kukui tree, an old wahine (Hawaiian woman) was just

settling herself to begin on some work in hand.

"Yes," he nodded half-sadly to me, "in her last years Hiwilani went

back to the old ways, and to the old beliefs--in secret, of course.

And, BELIEVE me, she was some collector herself. You should have

seen her bones. She had them all about her bedroom, in big jars,

and they constituted most all her relatives, except a half-dozen or

so that Kanau beat her out of by getting to them first. The way

the pair of them used to quarrel about those bones was awe-

inspiring. And it gave me the creeps, when I was a boy, to go into

that big, for-ever-twilight room of hers, and know that in this jar

was all that remained of my maternal grand-aunt, and that in that

jar was my great-grandfather, and that in all the jars were the

preserved bone-remnants of the shadowy dust of the ancestors whose

seed had come down and been incorporated in the living, breathing

me. Hiwilani had gone quite native at the last, sleeping on mats

on the hard floor--she'd fired out of the room the great, royal,

canopied four-poster that had been presented to her grandmother by

Lord Byron, who was the cousin of the Don Juan Byron and came here

in the frigate Blonde in 1825.

"She went back to all native, at the last, and I can see her yet,

biting a bite out of the raw fish ere she tossed them to her women

to eat. And she made them finish her poi, or whatever else she did

not finish of herself. She--"

But he broke off abruptly, and by the sensitive dilation of his

nostrils and by the expression of his mobile features I saw that he

had read in the air and identified the odour that offended him.

"Deuce take it!" he cried to me. "It stinks to heaven. And I

shall be doomed to wear it until we're rescued."

There was no mistaking the object of his abhorrence. The ancient

crone was making a dearest-loved lei (wreath) of the fruit of the

hala which is the screw-pine or pandanus of the South Pacific. She

was cutting the many sections or nut-envelopes of the fruit into

fluted bell-shapes preparatory to stringing them on the twisted and

tough inner bark of the hau tree. It certainly smelled to heaven,

but, to me, a malahini (new-comer), the smell was wine-woody and

fruit-juicy and not unpleasant.

Prince Akuli's limousine had broken an axle a quarter of a mile

away, and he and I had sought shelter from the sun in this

veritable bowery of a mountain home. Humble and grass-thatched was

the house, but it stood in a treasure-garden of begonias that

sprayed their delicate blooms a score of feet above our heads, that

were like trees, with willowy trunks of trees as thick as a man's

arm. Here we refreshed ourselves with drinking-coconuts, while a

cowboy rode a dozen miles to the nearest telephone and summoned a

machine from town. The town itself we could see, the Lakanaii

metropolis of Olokona, a smudge of smoke on the shore-line, as we

looked down across the miles of cane-fields, the billow-wreathed

reef-lines, and the blue haze of ocean to where the island of Oahu

shimmered like a dim opal on the horizon.

Maui is the Valley Isle of Hawaii, and Kauai the Garden Isle; but

Lakanaii, lying abreast of Oahu, is recognized in the present, and

was known of old and always, as the Jewel Isle of the group. Not

the largest, nor merely the smallest, Lakanaii is conceded by all

to be the wildest, the most wildly beautiful, and, in its size, the

richest of all the islands. Its sugar tonnage per acre is the

highest, its mountain beef-cattle the fattest, its rainfall the

most generous without ever being disastrous. It resembles Kauai in

that it is the first-formed and therefore the oldest island, so

that it had had time sufficient to break down its lava rock into

the richest soil, and to erode the canyons between the ancient

craters until they are like Grand Canyons of the Colorado, with

numberless waterfalls plunging thousands of feet in the sheer or

dissipating into veils of vapour, and evanescing in mid-air to

descend softly and invisibly through a mirage of rainbows, like so

much dew or gentle shower, upon the abyss-floors.

Yet Lakanaii is easy to describe. But how can one describe Prince

Akuli? To know him is to know all Lakanaii most thoroughly. In

addition, one must know thoroughly a great deal of the rest of the

world. In the first place, Prince Akuli has no recognized nor

legal right to be called "Prince." Furthermore, "Akuli" means the

"squid." So that Prince Squid could scarcely be the dignified

title of the straight descendant of the oldest and highest aliis

(high chiefs) of Hawaii--an old and exclusive stock, wherein, in

the ancient way of the Egyptian Pharaohs, brothers and sisters had

even wed on the throne for the reason that they could not marry

beneath rank, that in all their known world there was none of

higher rank, and that, at every hazard, the dynasty must be

perpetuated.

I have heard Prince Akuli's singing historians (inherited from his

father) chanting their interminable genealogies, by which they

demonstrated that he was the highest alii in all Hawaii. Beginning

with Wakea, who is their Adam, and with Papa, their Eve, through as

many generations as there are letters in our alphabet they trace

down to Nanakaoko, the first ancestor born in Hawaii and whose wife

was Kahihiokalani. Later, but always highest, their generations

split from the generations of Ua, who was the founder of the two

distinct lines of the Kauai and Oahu kings.

In the eleventh century A.D., by the Lakanaii historians, at the

time brothers and sisters mated because none existed to excel them,

their rank received a boost of new blood of rank that was next to

heaven's door. One Hoikemaha, steering by the stars and the

ancient traditions, arrived in a great double-canoe from Samoa. He

married a lesser alii of Lakanaii, and when his three sons were

grown, returned with them to Samoa to bring back his own youngest

brother. But with him he brought back Kumi, the son of Tui Manua,

which latter's rank was highest in all Polynesia, and barely second

to that of the demigods and gods. So the estimable seed of Kumi,

eight centuries before, had entered into the aliis of Lakanaii, and

been passed down by them in the undeviating line to reposit in

Prince Akuli.

Him I first met, talking with an Oxford accent, in the officers'

mess of the Black Watch in South Africa. This was just before that

famous regiment was cut to pieces at Magersfontein. He had as much

right to be in that mess as he had to his accent, for he was

Oxford-educated and held the Queen's Commission. With him, as his

guest, taking a look at the war, was Prince Cupid, so nicknamed,

but the true prince of all Hawaii, including Lakanaii, whose real

and legal title was Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaole, and who might

have been the living King of Hawaii Nei had it not been for the

haole (white man) Revolution and Annexation--this, despite the fact

that Prince Cupid's alii genealogy was lesser to the heaven-boosted

genealogy of Prince Akuli. For Prince Akuli might have been King

of Lakanaii, and of all Hawaii, perhaps, had not his grandfather

been soundly thrashed by the first and greatest of the Kamehamehas.

This had occurred in the year 1810, in the booming days of the

sandalwood trade, and in the same year that the King of Kauai came

in, and was good, and ate out of Kamehameha's hand. Prince Akuli's

grandfather, in that year, had received his trouncing and

subjugating because he was "old school." He had not imaged island

empire in terms of gunpowder and haole gunners. Kamehameha,

farther-visioned, had annexed the service of haoles, including such

men as Isaac Davis, mate and sole survivor of the massacred crew of

the schooner Fair American, and John Young, captured boatswain of

the snow Eleanor. And Isaac Davis, and John Young, and others of

their waywardly adventurous ilk, with six-pounder brass carronades

from the captured Iphigenia and Fair American, had destroyed the

war canoes and shattered the morale of the King of Lakanaii's land-

fighters, receiving duly in return from Kamehameha, according to

agreement: Isaac Davis, six hundred mature and fat hogs; John

Young, five hundred of the same described pork on the hoof that was

split.

And so, out of all incests and lusts of the primitive cultures and

beast-man's gropings toward the stature of manhood, out of all red

murders, and brute battlings, and matings with the younger brothers

of the demigods, world-polished, Oxford-accented, twentieth century

to the tick of the second, comes Prince Akuli, Prince Squid, pure-

veined Polynesian, a living bridge across the thousand centuries,

comrade, friend, and fellow-traveller out of his wrecked seven-

thousand-dollar limousine, marooned with me in a begonia paradise

fourteen hundred feet above the sea, and his island metropolis of

Olokona, to tell me of his mother, who reverted in her old age to

ancientness of religious concept and ancestor worship, and

collected and surrounded herself with the charnel bones of those

who had been her forerunners back in the darkness of time.

"King Kalakaua started this collecting fad, over on Oahu," Prince

Akuli continued. "And his queen, Kapiolani, caught the fad from

him. They collected everything--old makaloa mats, old tapas, old

calabashes, old double-canoes, and idols which the priests had

saved from the general destruction in 1819. I haven't seen a

pearl-shell fish-hook in years, but I swear that Kalakaua

accumulated ten thousand of them, to say nothing of human jaw-bone

fish-hooks, and feather cloaks, and capes and helmets, and stone

adzes, and poi-pounders of phallic design. When he and Kapiolani

made their royal progresses around the islands, their hosts had to

hide away their personal relics. For to the king, in theory,

belongs all property of his people; and with Kalakaua, when it came

to the old things, theory and practice were one.

"From him my father, Kanau, got the collecting bee in his bonnet,

and Hiwilani was likewise infected. But father was modern to his

finger-tips. He believed neither in the gods of the kahunas"

(priests) "nor of the missionaries. He didn't believe in anything

except sugar stocks, horse-breeding, and that his grandfather had

been a fool in not collecting a few Isaac Davises and John Youngs

and brass carronades before he went to war with Kamehameha. So he

collected curios in the pure collector's spirit; but my mother took

it seriously. That was why she went in for bones. I remember,

too, she had an ugly old stone-idol she used to yammer to and crawl

around on the floor before. It's in the Deacon Museum now. I sent

it there after her death, and her collection of bones to the Royal

Mausoleum in Olokona.

"I don't know whether you remember her father was Kaaukuu. Well,

he was, and he was a giant. When they built the Mausoleum, his

bones, nicely cleaned and preserved, were dug out of their hiding-

place, and placed in the Mausoleum. Hiwilani had an old retainer,

Ahuna. She stole the key from Kanau one night, and made Ahuna go

and steal her father's bones out of the Mausoleum. I know. And he

must have been a giant. She kept him in one of her big jars. One

day, when I was a tidy size of a lad, and curious to know if

Kaaukuu was as big as tradition had him, I fished his intact lower

jaw out of the jar, and the wrappings, and tried it on. I stuck my

head right through it, and it rested around my neck and on my

shoulders like a horse collar. And every tooth was in the jaw,

whiter than porcelain, without a cavity, the enamel unstained and

unchipped. I got the walloping of my life for that offence,

although she had to call old Ahuna in to help give it to me. But

the incident served me well. It won her confidence in me that I

was not afraid of the bones of the dead ones, and it won for me my

Oxford education. As you shall see, if that car doesn't arrive

first.

"Old Ahuna was one of the real old ones with the hall-mark on him

and branded into him of faithful born-slave service. He knew more

about my mother's family, and my father's, than did both of them

put together. And he knew, what no living other knew, the burial-

place of centuries, where were hid the bones of most of her

ancestors and of Kanau's. Kanau couldn't worm it out of the old

fellow, who looked upon Kanau as an apostate.

"Hiwilani struggled with the old codger for years. How she ever

succeeded is beyond me. Of course, on the face of it, she was

faithful to the old religion. This might have persuaded Ahuna to

loosen up a little. Or she may have jolted fear into him; for she

knew a lot of the line of chatter of the old Huni sorcerers, and

she could make a noise like being on terms of utmost intimacy with

Uli, who is the chiefest god of sorcery of all the sorcerers. She

could skin the ordinary kahuna lapaau" (medicine man) "when it came

to praying to Lonopuha and Koleamoku; read dreams and visions and

signs and omens and indigestions to beat the band; make the

practitioners under the medicine god, Maiola, look like thirty

cents; pull off a pule hee incantation that would make them dizzy;

and she claimed to a practice of kahuna hoenoho, which is modern

spiritism, second to none. I have myself seen her drink the wind,

throw a fit, and prophesy. The aumakuas were brothers to her when

she slipped offerings to them across the altars of the ruined

heiaus" (temples) "with a line of prayer that was as unintelligible

to me as it was hair-raising. And as for old Ahuna, she could make

him get down on the floor and yammer and bite himself when she

pulled the real mystery dope on him.

"Nevertheless, my private opinion is that it was the anaana stuff

that got him. She snipped off a lock of his hair one day with a

pair of manicure scissors. This lock of hair was what we call the

maunu, meaning the bait. And she took jolly good care to let him

know she had that bit of his hair. Then she tipped it off to him

that she had buried it, and was deeply engaged each night in her

offerings and incantations to Uli."

"That was the regular praying-to-death?" I queried in the pause of

Prince Akuli's lighting his cigarette.

"Sure thing," he nodded. "And Ahuna fell for it. First he tried

to locate the hiding-place of the bait of his hair. Failing that,

he hired a pahiuhiu sorcerer to find it for him. But Hiwilani

queered that game by threatening to the sorcerer to practise apo

leo on him, which is the art of permanently depriving a person of

the power of speech without otherwise injuring him.

"Then it was that Ahuna began to pine away and get more like a

corpse every day. In desperation he appealed to Kanau. I happened

to be present. You have heard what sort of a man my father was.

"'Pig!' he called Ahuna. 'Swine-brains! Stinking fish! Die and

be done with it. You are a fool. It is all nonsense. There is

nothing in anything. The drunken haole, Howard, can prove the

missionaries wrong. Square-face gin proves Howard wrong. The

doctors say he won't last six months. Even square-face gin lies.

Life is a liar, too. And here are hard times upon us, and a slump

in sugar. Glanders has got into my brood mares. I wish I could

lie down and sleep for a hundred years, and wake up to find sugar

up a hundred points.'

"Father was something of a philosopher himself, with a bitter wit

and a trick of spitting out staccato epigrams. He clapped his

hands. 'Bring me a high-ball,' he commanded; 'no, bring me two

high-balls.' Then he turned on Ahuna. 'Go and let yourself die,

old heathen, survival of darkness, blight of the Pit that you are.

But don't die on these premises. I desire merriment and laughter,

and the sweet tickling of music, and the beauty of youthful motion,

not the croaking of sick toads and googly-eyed corpses about me

still afoot on their shaky legs. I'll be that way soon enough if I

live long enough. And it will be my everlasting regret if I don't

live long enough. Why in hell did I sink that last twenty thousand

into Curtis's plantation? Howard warned me the slump was coming,

but I thought it was the square-face making him lie. And Curtis

has blown his brains out, and his head luna has run away with his

daughter, and the sugar chemist has got typhoid, and everything's

going to smash.'

"He clapped his hands for his servants, and commanded: 'Bring me

my singing boys. And the hula dancers--plenty of them. And send

for old Howard. Somebody's got to pay, and I'll shorten his six

months of life by a month. But above all, music. Let there be

music. It is stronger than drink, and quicker than opium.'

"He with his music druggery! It was his father, the old savage,

who was entertained on board a French frigate, and for the first

time heard an orchestra. When the little concert was over, the

captain, to find which piece he liked best, asked which piece he'd

like repeated. Well, when grandfather got done describing, what

piece do you think it was?"

I gave up, while the Prince lighted a fresh cigarette.

"Why, it was the first one, of course. Not the real first one, but

the tuning up that preceded it."

I nodded, with eyes and face mirthful of appreciation, and Prince

Akuli, with another apprehensive glance at the old wahine and her

half-made hala lei, returned to his tale of the bones of his

ancestors.

"It was somewhere around this stage of the game that old Ahuna gave

in to Hiwilani. He didn't exactly give in. He compromised.

That's where I come in. If he would bring her the bones of her

mother, and of her grandfather (who was the father of Kaaukuu, and

who by tradition was rumoured to have been even bigger than his

giant son, she would return to Ahuna the bait of his hair she was

praying him to death with. He, on the other hand, stipulated that

he was not to reveal to her the secret burial-place of all the alii

of Lakanaii all the way back. Nevertheless, he was too old to dare

the adventure alone, must be helped by some one who of necessity

would come to know the secret, and I was that one. I was the

highest alii, beside my father and mother, and they were no higher

than I.

"So I came upon the scene, being summoned into the twilight room to

confront those two dubious old ones who dealt with the dead. They

were a pair--mother fat to despair of helplessness, Ahuna thin as a

skeleton and as fragile. Of her one had the impression that if she

lay down on her back she could not roll over without the aid of

block-and-tackle; of Ahuna one's impression was that the tooth-

pickedness of him would shatter to splinters if one bumped into

him.

"And when they had broached the matter, there was more pilikia"

(trouble). "My father's attitude stiffened my resolution. I

refused to go on the bone-snatching expedition. I said I didn't

care a whoop for the bones of all the aliis of my family and race.

You see, I had just discovered Jules Verne, loaned me by old

Howard, and was reading my head off. Bones? When there were North

Poles, and Centres of Earths, and hairy comets to ride across space

among the stars! Of course I didn't want to go on any bone-

snatching expedition. I said my father was able-bodied, and he

could go, splitting equally with her whatever bones he brought

back. But she said he was only a blamed collector--or words to

that effect, only stronger.

"'I know him,' she assured me. 'He'd bet his mother's bones on a

horse-race or an ace-full.'

"I stood with fat her when it came to modern scepticism, and I told

her the whole thing was rubbish. 'Bones?' I said. 'What are

bones? Even field mice, and many rats, and cockroaches have bones,

though the roaches wear their bones outside their meat instead of

inside. The difference between man and other animals,' I told her,

'is not bones, but brain. Why, a bullock has bigger bones than a

man, and more than one fish I've eaten has more bones, while a

whale beats creation when it comes to bone.'

"It was frank talk, which is our Hawaiian way, as you have long

since learned. In return, equally frank, she regretted she hadn't

given me away as a feeding child when I was born. Next she

bewailed that she had ever borne me. From that it was only a step

to anaana me. She threatened me with it, and I did the bravest

thing I have ever done. Old Howard had given me a knife of many

blades, and corkscrews, and screw-drivers, and all sorts of

contrivances, including a tiny pair of scissors. I proceeded to

pare my finger-nails.

"'There,' I said, as I put the parings into her hand. 'Just to

show you what I think of it. There's bait and to spare. Go on and

anaana me if you can.'

"I have said it was brave. It was. I was only fifteen, and I had

lived all my days in the thick of the mystery stuff, while my

scepticism, very recently acquired, was only skin-deep. I could be

a sceptic out in the open in the sunshine. But I was afraid of the

dark. And in that twilight room, the bones of the dead all about

me in the big jars, why, the old lady had me scared stiff. As we

say to-day, she had my goat. Only I was brave and didn't let on.

And I put my bluff across, for my mother flung the parings into my

face and burst into tears. Tears in an elderly woman weighing

three hundred and twenty pounds are scarcely impressive, and I

hardened the brassiness of my bluff.

"She shifted her attack, and proceeded to talk with the dead. Nay,

more, she summoned them there, and, though I was all ripe to see

but couldn't, Ahuna saw the father of Kaaukuu in the corner and lay

down on the floor and yammered. Just the same, although I almost

saw the old giant, I didn't quite see him.

"'Let him talk for himself,' I said. But Hiwilani persisted in

doing the talking for him, and in laying upon me his solemn

injunction that I must go with Ahuna to the burial-place and bring

back the bones desired by my mother. But I argued that if the dead

ones could be invoked to kill living men by wasting sicknesses, and

that if the dead ones could transport themselves from their burial-

crypts into the corner of her room, I couldn't see why they

shouldn't leave their bones behind them, there in her room and

ready to be jarred, when they said good-bye and departed for the

middle world, the over world, or the under world, or wherever they

abided when they weren't paying social calls.

"Whereupon mother let loose on poor old Ahuna, or let loose upon

him the ghost of Kaaukuu's father, supposed to be crouching there

in the corner, who commanded Ahuna to divulge to her the burial-

place. I tried to stiffen him up, telling him to let the old ghost

divulge the secret himself, than whom nobody else knew it better,

seeing that he had resided there upwards of a century. But Ahuna

was old school. He possessed no iota of scepticism. The more

Hiwilani frightened him, the more he rolled on the floor and the

louder he yammered.

"But when he began to bite himself, I gave in. I felt sorry for

him; but, over and beyond that, I began to admire him. He was

sterling stuff, even if he was a survival of darkness. Here, with

the fear of mystery cruelly upon him, believing Hiwilani's dope

implicitly, he was caught between two fidelities. She was his

living alii, his alii kapo" (sacred chiefess). "He must be

faithful to her, yet more faithful must he be to all the dead and

gone aliis of her line who depended solely on him that their bones

should not be disturbed.

"I gave in. But I, too, imposed stipulations. Steadfastly had my

father, new school, refused to let me go to England for my

education. That sugar was slumping was reason sufficient for him.

Steadfastly had my mother, old school, refused, her heathen mind

too dark to place any value on education, while it was shrewd

enough to discern that education led to unbelief in all that was

old. I wanted to study, to study science, the arts, philosophy, to

study everything old Howard knew, which enabled him, on the edge of

the grave, undauntedly to sneer at superstition, and to give me

Jules Verne to read. He was an Oxford man before he went wild and

wrong, and it was he who had set the Oxford bee buzzing in my

noddle.

"In the end Ahuna and I, old school and new school leagued

together, won out. Mother promised that she'd make father send me

to England, even if she had to pester him into a prolonged drinking

that would make his digestion go back on him. Also, Howard was to

accompany me, so that I could decently bury him in England. He was

a queer one, old Howard, an individual if there ever was one. Let

me tell you a little story about him. It was when Kalakaua was

starting on his trip around the world. You remember, when

Armstrong, and Judd, and the drunken valet of a German baron

accompanied him. Kalakaua made the proposition to Howard . . . "

But here the long-apprehended calamity fell upon Prince Akuli. The

old wahine had finished her lei hala. Barefooted, with no

adornment of femininity, clad in a shapeless shift of much-washed

cotton, with age-withered face and labour-gnarled hands, she

cringed before him and crooned a mele in his honour, and, still

cringing, put the lei around his neck. It is true the hala smelled

most freshly strong, yet was the act beautiful to me, and the old

woman herself beautiful to me. My mind leapt into the Prince's

narrative so that to Ahuna I could not help likening her.

Oh, truly, to be an alii in Hawaii, even in this second decade of

the twentieth century, is no light thing. The alii, utterly of the

new, must be kindly and kingly to those old ones absolutely of the

old. Nor did the Prince without a kingdom, his loved island long

since annexed by the United States and incorporated into a

territory along with the rest of the Hawaiian Islands--nor did the

Prince betray his repugnance for the odour of the hala. He bowed

his head graciously; and his royal condescending words of pure

Hawaiian I knew would make the old woman's heart warm until she

died with remembrance of the wonderful occasion. The wry grimace

he stole to me would not have been made had he felt any uncertainty

of its escaping her.

"And so," Prince Akuli resumed, after the wahine had tottered away

in an ecstasy, "Ahuna and I departed on our grave-robbing

adventure. You know the Iron-bound Coast."

I nodded, knowing full well the spectacle of those lava leagues of

weather coast, truly iron-bound so far as landing-places or

anchorages were concerned, great forbidding cliff-walls thousands

of feet in height, their summits wreathed in cloud and rain squall,

their knees hammered by the trade-wind billows into spouting,

spuming white, the air, from sea to rain-cloud, spanned by a myriad

leaping waterfalls, provocative, in day or night, of countless sun

and lunar rainbows. Valleys, so called, but fissures rather, slit

the cyclopean walls here and there, and led away into a lofty and

madly vertical back country, most of it inaccessible to the foot of

man and trod only by the wild goat.

"Precious little you know of it," Prince Akuli retorted, in reply

to my nod. "You've seen it only from the decks of steamers. There

are valleys there, inhabited valleys, out of which there is no exit

by land, and perilously accessible by canoe only on the selected

days of two months in the year. When I was twenty-eight I was over

there in one of them on a hunting trip. Bad weather, in the

auspicious period, marooned us for three weeks. Then five of my

party and myself swam for it out through the surf. Three of us

made the canoes waiting for us. The other two were flung back on

the sand, each with a broken arm. Save for us, the entire party

remained there until the next year, ten months afterward. And one

of them was Wilson, of Wilson & Wall, the Honolulu sugar factors.

And he was engaged to be married.

"I've seen a goat, shot above by a hunter above, land at my feet a

thousand yards underneath. BELIEVE me, that landscape seemed to

rain goats and rocks for ten minutes. One of my canoemen fell off

the trail between the two little valleys of Aipio and Luno. He hit

first fifteen hundred feet beneath us, and fetched up in a ledge

three hundred feet farther down. We didn't bury him. We couldn't

get to him, and flying machines had not yet been invented. His

bones are there now, and, barring earthquake and volcano, will be

there when the Trumps of Judgment sound.

"Goodness me! Only the other day, when our Promotion Committee,

trying to compete with Honolulu for the tourist trade, called in

the engineers to estimate what it would cost to build a scenic

drive around the Iron-bound Coast, the lowest figures were a

quarter of a million dollars a mile!

"And Ahuna and I, an old man and a young boy, started for that

stern coast in a canoe paddled by old men! The youngest of them,

the steersman, was over sixty, while the rest of them averaged

seventy at the very least. There were eight of them, and we

started in the night-time, so that none should see us go. Even

these old ones, trusted all their lives, knew no more than the

fringe of the secret. To the fringe, only, could they take us.

"And the fringe was--I don't mind telling that much--the fringe was

Ponuloo Valley. We got there the third afternoon following. The

old chaps weren't strong on the paddles. It was a funny

expedition, into such wild waters, with now one and now another of

our ancient-mariner crew collapsing and even fainting. One of them

actually died on the second morning out. We buried him overside.

It was positively uncanny, the heathen ceremonies those grey ones

pulled off in burying their grey brother. And I was only fifteen,

alii kapo over them by blood of heathenness and right of hereditary

heathen rule, with a penchant for Jules Verne and shortly to sail

for England for my education! So one learns. Small wonder my

father was a philosopher, in his own lifetime spanning the history

of man from human sacrifice and idol worship, through the religions

of man's upward striving, to the Medusa of rank atheism at the end

of it all. Small wonder that, like old Ecclesiastes, he found

vanity in all things and surcease in sugar stocks, singing boys,

and hula dancers."

Prince Akuli debated with his soul for an interval.

"Oh, well," he sighed, "I have done some spanning of time myself."

He sniffed disgustedly of the odour of the hala lei that stifled

him. "It stinks of the ancient." he vouchsafed. "I? I stink of

the modern. My father was right. The sweetest of all is sugar up

a hundred points, or four aces in a poker game. If the Big War

lasts another year, I shall clean up three-quarters of a million

over a million. If peace breaks to-morrow, with the consequent

slump, I could enumerate a hundred who will lose my direct bounty,

and go into the old natives' homes my father and I long since

endowed for them."

He clapped his hands, and the old wahine tottered toward him in an

excitement of haste to serve. She cringed before him, as he drew

pad and pencil from his breast pocket.

"Each month, old woman of our old race," he addressed her, "will

you receive, by rural free delivery, a piece of written paper that

you can exchange with any storekeeper anywhere for ten dollars

gold. This shall be so for as long as you live. Behold! I write

the record and the remembrance of it, here and now, with this

pencil on this paper. And this is because you are of my race and

service, and because you have honoured me this day with your mats

to sit upon and your thrice-blessed and thrice-delicious lei hala."

He turned to me a weary and sceptical eye, saying:

"And if I die to-morrow, not alone will the lawyers contest my

disposition of my property, but they will contest my benefactions

and my pensions accorded, and the clarity of my mind.

"It was the right weather of the year; but even then, with our old

weak ones at the paddles, we did not attempt the landing until we

had assembled half the population of Ponuloo Valley down on the

steep little beach. Then we counted our waves, selected the best

one, and ran in on it. Of course, the canoe was swamped and the

outrigger smashed, but the ones on shore dragged us up unharmed

beyond the wash.

"Ahuna gave his orders. In the night-time all must remain within

their houses, and the dogs be tied up and have their jaws bound so

that there should be no barking. And in the night-time Ahuna and I

stole out on our journey, no one knowing whether we went to the

right or left or up the valley toward its head. We carried jerky,

and hard poi and dried aku, and from the quantity of the food I

knew we were to be gone several days. Such a trail! A Jacob's

ladder to the sky, truly, for that first pali" (precipice), "almost

straight up, was three thousand feet above the sea. And we did it

in the dark!

"At the top, beyond the sight of the valley we had left, we slept

until daylight on the hard rock in a hollow nook Ahuna knew, and

that was so small that we were squeezed. And the old fellow, for

fear that I might move in the heavy restlessness of lad's sleep,

lay on the outside with one arm resting across me. At daybreak, I

saw why. Between us and the lip of the cliff scarcely a yard

intervened. I crawled to the lip and looked, watching the abyss

take on immensity in the growing light and trembling from the fear

of height that was upon me. At last I made out the sea, over half

a mile straight beneath. And we had done this thing in the dark!

"Down in the next valley, which was a very tiny one, we found

evidence of the ancient population, but there were no people. The

only way was the crazy foot-paths up and down the dizzy valley

walls from valley to valley. But lean and aged as Ahuna was, he

seemed untirable. In the second valley dwelt an old leper in

hiding. He did not know me, and when Ahuna told him who I was, he

grovelled at my feet, almost clasping them, and mumbled a mele of

all my line out of a lipless mouth.

"The next valley proved to be the valley. It was long and so

narrow that its floor had caught not sufficient space of soil to

grow taro for a single person. Also, it had no beach, the stream

that threaded it leaping a pali of several hundred feet down to the

sea. It was a god-forsaken place of naked, eroded lava, to which

only rarely could the scant vegetation find root-hold. For miles

we followed up that winding fissure through the towering walls, far

into the chaos of back country that lies behind the Iron-bound

Coast. How far that valley penetrated I do not know, but, from the

quantity of water in the stream, I judged it far. We did not go to

the valley's head. I could see Ahuna casting glances to all the

peaks, and I knew he was taking bearings, known to him alone, from

natural objects. When he halted at the last, it was with abrupt

certainty. His bearings had crossed. He threw down the portion of

food and outfit he had carried. It was the place. I looked on

either hand at the hard, implacable walls, naked of vegetation, and

could dream of no burial-place possible in such bare adamant.

"We ate, then stripped for work. Only did Ahuna permit me to

retain my shoes. He stood beside me at the edge of a deep pool,

likewise apparelled and prodigiously skinny.

"'You will dive down into the pool at this spot,' he said. 'Search

the rock with your hands as you descend, and, about a fathom and a

half down, you will find a hole. Enter it, head-first, but going

slowly, for the lava rock is sharp and may cut your head and body.'

"'And then?' I queried. 'You will find the hole growing larger,'

was his answer. 'When you have gone all of eight fathoms along the

passage, come up slowly, and you will find your head in the air,

above water, in the dark. Wait there then for me. The water is

very cold.'

"It didn't sound good to me. I was thinking, not of the cold water

and the dark, but of the bones. 'You go first,' I said. But he

claimed he could not. 'You are my alii, my prince,' he said. 'It

is impossible that I should go before you into the sacred burial-

place of your kingly ancestors.'

"But the prospect did not please. 'Just cut out this prince

stuff,' I told him. 'It isn't what it's cracked up to be. You go

first, and I'll never tell on you.' 'Not alone the living must we

please,' he admonished, 'but, more so, the dead must we please.

Nor can we lie to the dead.'

"We argued it out, and for half an hour it was stalemate. I

wouldn't, and he simply couldn't. He tried to buck me up by

appealing to my pride. He chanted the heroic deeds of my

ancestors; and, I remember especially, he sang to me of Mokomoku,

my great-grandfather and the gigantic father of the gigantic

Kaaukuu, telling how thrice in battle Mokomoku leaped among his

foes, seizing by the neck a warrior in either hand and knocking

their heads together until they were dead. But this was not what

decided me. I really felt sorry for old Ahuna, he was so beside

himself for fear the expedition would come to naught. And I was

coming to a great admiration for the old fellow, not least among

the reasons being the fact of his lying down to sleep between me

and the cliff-lip.

"So, with true alii-authority of command, saying, 'You will

immediately follow after me,' I dived in. Everything he had said

was correct. I found the entrance to the subterranean passage,

swam carefully through it, cutting my shoulder once on the lava-

sharp roof, and emerged in the darkness and air. But before I

could count thirty, he broke water beside me, rested his hand on my

arm to make sure of me, and directed me to swim ahead of him for

the matter of a hundred feet or so. Then we touched bottom and

climbed out on the rocks. And still no light, and I remember I was

glad that our altitude was too high for centipedes.

"He had brought with him a coconut calabash, tightly stoppered, of

whale-oil that must have been landed on Lahaina beach thirty years

before. From his mouth he took a water-tight arrangement of a

matchbox composed of two empty rifle-cartridges fitted snugly

together. He lighted the wicking that floated on the oil, and I

looked about, and knew disappointment. No burial-chamber was it,

but merely a lava tube such as occurs on all the islands.

"He put the calabash of light into my hands and started me ahead of

him on the way, which he assured me was long, but not too long. It

was long, at least a mile in my sober judgment, though at the time

it seemed five miles; and it ascended sharply. When Ahuna, at the

last, stopped me, I knew we were close to our goal. He knelt on

his lean old knees on the sharp lava rock, and clasped my knees

with his skinny arms. My hand that was free of the calabash lamp

he placed on his head. He chanted to me, with his old cracked,

quavering voice, the line of my descent and my essential high alii-

ness. And then he said:

"'Tell neither Kanau nor Hiwilani aught of what you are about to

behold. There is no sacredness in Kanau. His mind is filled with

sugar and the breeding of horses. I do know that he sold a feather

cloak his grandfather had worn to that English collector for eight

thousand dollars, and the money he lost the next day betting on the

polo game between Maui and Oahu. Hiwilani, your mother, is filled

with sacredness. She is too much filled with sacredness. She

grows old, and weak-headed, and she traffics over-much with

sorceries.'

"'No,' I made answer. 'I shall tell no one. If I did, then would

I have to return to this place again. And I do not want ever to

return to this place. I'll try anything once. This I shall never

try twice.'

"'It is well,' he said, and arose, falling behind so that I should

enter first. Also, he said: 'Your mother is old. I shall bring

her, as promised, the bones of her mother and of her grandfather.

These should content her until she dies; and then, if I die before

her, it is you who must see to it that all the bones in her family

collection are placed in the Royal Mausoleum.'

"I have given all the Islands' museums the once-over," Prince Akuli

lapsed back into slang, "and I must say that the totality of the

collections cannot touch what I saw in our Lakanaii burial-cave.

Remember, and with reason and history, we trace back the highest

and oldest genealogy in the Islands. Everything that I had ever

dreamed or heard of, and much more that I had not, was there. The

place was wonderful. Ahuna, sepulchrally muttering prayers and

meles, moved about, lighting various whale-oil lamp-calabashes.

They were all there, the Hawaiian race from the beginning of

Hawaiian time. Bundles of bones and bundles of bones, all wrapped

decently in tapa, until for all the world it was like the parcels-

post department at a post office.

"And everything! Kahilis, which you may know developed out of the

fly-flapper into symbols of royalty until they became larger than

hearse-plumes with handles a fathom and a half and over two fathoms

in length. And such handles! Of the wood of the kauila, inlaid

with shell and ivory and bone with a cleverness that had died out

among our artificers a century before. It was a centuries-old

family attic. For the first time I saw things I had only heard of,

such as the pahoas, fashioned of whale-teeth and suspended by

braided human hair, and worn on the breast only by the highest of

rank.

"There were tapes and mats of the rarest and oldest; capes and leis

and helmets and cloaks, priceless all, except the too-ancient ones,

of the feathers of the mamo, and of the iwi and the akakane and the

o-o. I saw one of the mamo cloaks that was superior to that finest

one in the Bishop Museum in Honolulu, and that they value at

between half a million and a million dollars. Goodness me, I

thought at the time, it was lucky Kanau didn't know about it.

"Such a mess of things! Carved gourds and calabashes, shell-

scrapers, nets of olona fibre, a junk of ie-ie baskets, and fish-

hooks of every bone and spoon of shell. Musical instruments of the

forgotten days--ukukes and nose flutes, and kiokios which are

likewise played with one unstoppered nostril. Taboo poi bowls and

finger bowls, left-handed adzes of the canoe gods, lava-cup lamps,

stone mortars and pestles and poi-pounders. And adzes again, a

myriad of them, beautiful ones, from an ounce in weight for the

finer carving of idols to fifteen pounds for the felling of trees,

and all with the sweetest handles I have ever beheld.

"There were the kaekeekes--you know, our ancient drums, hollowed

sections of the coconut tree, covered one end with shark-skin. The

first kaekeeke of all Hawaii Ahuna pointed out to me and told me

the tale. It was manifestly most ancient. He was afraid to touch

it for fear the age-rotted wood of it would crumble to dust, the

ragged tatters of the shark-skin head of it still attached. 'This

is the very oldest and father of all our kaekeekes,' Ahuna told me.

'Kila, the son of Moikeha, brought it back from far Raiatea in the

South Pacific. And it was Kila's own son, Kahai, who made that

same journey, and was gone ten years, and brought back with him

from Tahiti the first breadfruit trees that sprouted and grew on

Hawaiian soil.'

"And the bones and bones! The parcel-delivery array of them!

Besides the small bundles of the long bones, there were full

skeletons, tapa-wrapped, lying in one-man, and two- and three-man

canoes of precious koa wood, with curved outriggers of wiliwili

wood, and proper paddles to hand with the io-projection at the

point simulating the continuance of the handle, as if, like a

skewer, thrust through the flat length of the blade. And their war

weapons were laid away by the sides of the lifeless bones that had

wielded them--rusty old horse-pistols, derringers, pepper-boxes,

five-barrelled fantastiques, Kentucky long riffles, muskets handled

in trade by John Company and Hudson's Bay, shark-tooth swords,

wooden stabbing-knives, arrows and spears bone-headed of the fish

and the pig and of man, and spears and arrows wooden-headed and

fire-hardened.

"Ahuna put a spear in my hand, headed and pointed finely with the

long shin-bone of a man, and told me the tale of it. But first he

unwrapped the long bones, arms, and legs, of two parcels, the

bones, under the wrappings, neatly tied like so many faggots.

'This,' said Ahuna, exhibiting the pitiful white contents of one

parcel, 'is Laulani. She was the wife of Akaiko, whose bones, now

placed in your hands, much larger and male-like as you observe,

held up the flesh of a large man, a three-hundred pounder seven-

footer, three centuries agone. And this spear-head is made of the

shin-bone of Keola, a mighty wrestler and runner of their own time

and place. And he loved Laulani, and she fled with him. But in a

forgotten battle on the sands of Kalini, Akaiko rushed the lines of

the enemy, leading the charge that was successful, and seized upon

Keola, his wife's lover, and threw him to the ground, and sawed

through his neck to the death with a shark-tooth knife. Thus, in

the old days as always, did man combat for woman with man. And

Laulani was beautiful; that Keola should be made into a spearhead

for her! She was formed like a queen, and her body was a long bowl

of sweetness, and her fingers lomi'd' (massaged) 'to slimness and

smallness at her mother's breast. For ten generations have we

remembered her beauty. Your father's singing boys to-day sing of

her beauty in the hula that is named of her! This is Laulani, whom

you hold in your hands.'

"And, Ahuna done, I could but gaze, with imagination at the one

time sobered and fired. Old drunken Howard had lent me his

Tennyson, and I had mooned long and often over the Idyls of the

King. Here were the three, I thought--Arthur, and Launcelot, and

Guinevere. This, then, I pondered, was the end of it all, of life

and strife and striving and love, the weary spirits of these long-

gone ones to be invoked by fat old women and mangy sorcerers, the

bones of them to be esteemed of collectors and betted on horse-

races and ace-fulls or to be sold for cash and invested in sugar

stocks.

"For me it was illumination. I learned there in the burial-cave

the great lesson. And to Ahuna I said: 'The spear headed with the

long bone of Keola I shall take for my own. Never shall I sell it.

I shall keep it always.'

"'And for what purpose?' he demanded. And I replied: 'That the

contemplation of it may keep my hand sober and my feet on earth

with the knowledge that few men are fortunate enough to have as

much of a remnant of themselves as will compose a spearhead when

they are three centuries dead.'

"And Ahuna bowed his head, and praised my wisdom of judgment. But

at that moment the long-rotted olona-cord broke and the pitiful

woman's bones of Laulani shed from my clasp and clattered on the

rocky floor. One shin-bone, in some way deflected, fell under the

dark shadow of a canoe-bow, and I made up my mind that it should be

mine. So I hastened to help him in the picking up of the bones and

the tying, so that he did not notice its absence.

"'This,' said Ahuna, introducing me to another of my ancestors, 'is

your great-grandfather, Mokomoku, the father of Kaaukuu. Behold

the size of his bones. He was a giant. I shall carry him, because

of the long spear of Keola that will be difficult for you to carry

away. And this is Lelemahoa, your grandmother, the mother of your

mother, that you shall carry. And day grows short, and we must

still swim up through the waters to the sun ere darkness hides the

sun from the world.'

"But Ahuna, putting out the various calabashes of light by drowning

the wicks in the whale-oil, did not observe me include the shinbone

of Laulani with the bones of my grandmother."

The honk of the automobile, sent up from Olokona to rescue us,

broke off the Prince's narrative. We said good-bye to the ancient

and fresh-pensioned wahine, and departed. A half-mile on our way,

Prince Akuli resumed.

"So Ahuna and I returned to Hiwilani, and to her happiness, lasting

to her death the year following, two more of her ancestors abided

about her in the jars of her twilight room. Also, she kept her

compact and worried my father into sending me to England. I took

old Howard along, and he perked up and confuted the doctors, so

that it was three years before I buried him restored to the bosom

of my family. Sometimes I think he was the most brilliant man I

have ever known. Not until my return from England did Ahuna die,

the last custodian of our alii secrets. And at his death-bed he

pledged me again never to reveal the location in that nameless

valley, and never to go back myself.

"Much else I have forgotten to mention did I see there in the cave

that one time. There were the bones of Kumi, the near demigod, son

of Tui Manua of Samoa, who, in the long before, married into my

line and heaven-boosted my genealogy. And the bones of my great-

grandmother who had slept in the four-poster presented her by Lord

Byron. And Ahuna hinted tradition that there was reason for that

presentation, as well as for the historically known lingering of

the Blonde in Olokona for so long. And I held her poor bones in my

hands--bones once fleshed with sensate beauty, informed with

sparkle and spirit, instinct with love and love-warmness of arms

around and eyes and lips together, that had begat me in the end of

the generations unborn. It was a good experience. I am modern,

'tis true. I believe in no mystery stuff of old time nor of the

kahunas. And yet, I saw in that cave things which I dare not name

to you, and which I, since old Ahuna died, alone of the living

know. I have no children. With me my long line ceases. This is

the twentieth century, and we stink of gasolene. Nevertheless

these other and nameless things shall die with me. I shall never

revisit the burial-place. Nor in all time to come will any man

gaze upon it through living eyes unless the quakes of earth rend

the mountains asunder and spew forth the secrets contained in the

hearts of the mountains."

Prince Akuli ceased from speech. With welcome relief on his face,

he removed the lei hala from his neck, and, with a sniff and a

sigh, tossed it into concealment in the thick lantana by the side

of the road.

"But the shin-bone of Laulani?" I queried softly.

He remained silent while a mile of pasture land fled by us and

yielded to caneland.

"I have it now," he at last said. "And beside it is Keola, slain

ere his time and made into a spear-head for love of the woman whose

shin-bone abides near to him. To them, those poor pathetic bones,

I owe more than to aught else. I became possessed of them in the

period of my culminating adolescence. I know they changed the

entire course of my life and trend of my mind. They gave to me a

modesty and a humility in the world, from which my father's fortune

has ever failed to seduce me.

"And often, when woman was nigh to winning to the empery of my mind

over me, I sought Laulani's shin-bone. And often, when lusty

manhood stung me into feeling over-proud and lusty, I consulted the

spearhead remnant of Keola, one-time swift runner, and mighty

wrestler and lover, and thief of the wife of a king. The

contemplation of them has ever been of profound aid to me, and you

might well say that I have founded my religion or practice of

living upon them."

WAIKIKI, HONOLULU, HAWAIIAN ISLANDS.

July 16, 1916.

THE WATER BABY

I lent a weary ear to old Kohokumu's interminable chanting of the

deeds and adventures of Maui, the Promethean demi-god of Polynesia

who fished up dry land from ocean depths with hooks made fast to

heaven, who lifted up the sky whereunder previously men had gone on

all-fours, not having space to stand erect, and who made the sun

with its sixteen snared legs stand still and agree thereafter to

traverse the sky more slowly--the sun being evidently a trade

unionist and believing in the six-hour day, while Maui stood for

the open shop and the twelve-hour day.

"Now this," said Kohokumu, "is from Queen Lililuokalani's own

family mele:

"Maui became restless and fought the sun

With a noose that he laid.

And winter won the sun,

And summer was won by Maui . . . "

Born in the Islands myself, I knew the Hawaiian myths better than

this old fisherman, although I possessed not his memorization that

enabled him to recite them endless hours.

"And you believe all this?" I demanded in the sweet Hawaiian

tongue.

"It was a long time ago," he pondered. "I never saw Maui with my

own eyes. But all our old men from all the way back tell us these

things, as I, an old man, tell them to my sons and grandsons, who

will tell them to their sons and grandsons all the way ahead to

come."

"You believe," I persisted, "that whopper of Maui roping the sun

like a wild steer, and that other whopper of heaving up the sky

from off the earth?"

"I am of little worth, and am not wise, O Lakana," my fisherman

made answer. "Yet have I read the Hawaiian Bible the missionaries

translated to us, and there have I read that your Big Man of the

Beginning made the earth, and sky, and sun, and moon, and stars,

and all manner of animals from horses to cockroaches and from

centipedes and mosquitoes to sea lice and jellyfish, and man and

woman, and everything, and all in six days. Why, Maui didn't do

anything like that much. He didn't make anything. He just put

things in order, that was all, and it took him a long, long time to

make the improvements. And anyway, it is much easier and more

reasonable to believe the little whopper than the big whopper."

And what could I reply? He had me on the matter of reasonableness.

Besides, my head ached. And the funny thing, as I admitted it to

myself, was that evolution teaches in no uncertain voice that man

did run on all-fours ere he came to walk upright, that astronomy

states flatly that the speed of the revolution of the earth on its

axis has diminished steadily, thus increasing the length of day,

and that the seismologists accept that all the islands of Hawaii

were elevated from the ocean floor by volcanic action.

Fortunately, I saw a bamboo pole, floating on the surface several

hundred feet away, suddenly up-end and start a very devil's dance.

This was a diversion from the profitless discussion, and Kohokumu

and I dipped our paddles and raced the little outrigger canoe to

the dancing pole. Kohokumu caught the line that was fast to the

butt of the pole and under-handed it in until a two-foot ukikiki,

battling fiercely to the end, flashed its wet silver in the sun and

began beating a tattoo on the inside bottom of the canoe. Kohokumu

picked up a squirming, slimy squid, with his teeth bit a chunk of

live bait out of it, attached the bait to the hook, and dropped

line and sinker overside. The stick floated flat on the surface of

the water, and the canoe drifted slowly away. With a survey of the

crescent composed of a score of such sticks all lying flat,

Kohokumu wiped his hands on his naked sides and lifted the

wearisome and centuries-old chant of Kuali:

"Oh, the great fish-hook of Maui!

Manai-i-ka-lani--"made fast to the heavens"!

An earth-twisted cord ties the hook,

Engulfed from lofty Kauiki!

Its bait the red-billed Alae,

The bird to Hina sacred!

It sinks far down to Hawaii,

Struggling and in pain dying!

Caught is the land beneath the water,

Floated up, up to the surface,

But Hina hid a wing of the bird

And broke the land beneath the water!

Below was the bait snatched away

And eaten at once by the fishes,

The Ulua of the deep muddy places!

His aged voice was hoarse and scratchy from the drinking of too

much swipes at a funeral the night before, nothing of which

contributed to make me less irritable. My head ached. The sun-

glare on the water made my eyes ache, while I was suffering more

than half a touch of mal de mer from the antic conduct of the

outrigger on the blobby sea. The air was stagnant. In the lee of

Waihee, between the white beach and the roof, no whisper of breeze

eased the still sultriness. I really think I was too miserable to

summon the resolution to give up the fishing and go in to shore.

Lying back with closed eyes, I lost count of time. I even forgot

that Kohokumu was chanting till reminded of it by his ceasing. An

exclamation made me bare my eyes to the stab of the sun. He was

gazing down through the water-glass.

"It's a big one," he said, passing me the device and slipping over-

side feet-first into the water.

He went under without splash and ripple, turned over and swam down.

I followed his progress through the water-glass, which is merely an

oblong box a couple of feet long, open at the top, the bottom

sealed water-tight with a sheet of ordinary glass.

Now Kohokumu was a bore, and I was squeamishly out of sorts with

him for his volubleness, but I could not help admiring him as I

watched him go down. Past seventy years of age, lean as a

toothpick, and shrivelled like a mummy, he was doing what few young

athletes of my race would do or could do. It was forty feet to

bottom. There, partly exposed, but mostly hidden under the bulge

of a coral lump, I could discern his objective. His keen eyes had

caught the projecting tentacle of a squid. Even as he swam, the

tentacle was lazily withdrawn, so that there was no sign of the

creature. But the brief exposure of the portion of one tentacle

had advertised its owner as a squid of size.

The pressure at a depth of forty feet is no joke for a young man,

yet it did not seem to inconvenience this oldster. I am certain it

never crossed his mind to be inconvenienced. Unarmed, bare of body

save for a brief malo or loin cloth, he was undeterred by the

formidable creature that constituted his prey. I saw him steady

himself with his right hand on the coral lump, and thrust his left

arm into the hole to the shoulder. Half a minute elapsed, during

which time he seemed to be groping and rooting around with his left

hand. Then tentacle after tentacle, myriad-suckered and wildly

waving, emerged. Laying hold of his arm, they writhed and coiled

about his flesh like so many snakes. With a heave and a jerk

appeared the entire squid, a proper devil-fish or octopus.

But the old man was in no hurry for his natural element, the air

above the water. There, forty feet beneath, wrapped about by an

octopus that measured nine feet across from tentacle-tip to

tentacle-tip and that could well drown the stoutest swimmer, he

coolly and casually did the one thing that gave to him and his

empery over the monster. He shoved his lean, hawk-like face into

the very centre of the slimy, squirming mass, and with his several

ancient fangs bit into the heart and the life of the matter. This

accomplished, he came upward, slowly, as a swimmer should who is

changing atmospheres from the depths. Alongside the canoe, still

in the water and peeling off the grisly clinging thing, the

incorrigible old sinner burst into the pule of triumph which had

been chanted by the countless squid-catching generations before

him:

"O Kanaloa of the taboo nights!

Stand upright on the solid floor!

Stand upon the floor where lies the squid!

Stand up to take the squid of the deep sea!

Rise up, O Kanaloa!

Stir up! Stir up! Let the squid awake!

Let the squid that lies flat awake! Let the squid that lies spread

out . . . "

I closed my eyes and ears, not offering to lend him a hand, secure

in the knowledge that he could climb back unaided into the unstable

craft without the slightest risk of upsetting it.

"A very fine squid," he crooned. "It is a wahine" (female) "squid.

I shall now sing to you the song of the cowrie shell, the red

cowrie shell that we used as a bait for the squid--"

"You were disgraceful last night at the funeral," I headed him off.

"I heard all about it. You made much noise. You sang till

everybody was deaf. You insulted the son of the widow. You drank

swipes like a pig. Swipes are not good for your extreme age. Some

day you will wake up dead. You ought to be a wreck to-day--"

"Ha!" he chuckled. "And you, who drank no swipes, who was a babe

unborn when I was already an old man, who went to bed last night

with the sun and the chickens--this day are you a wreck. Explain

me that. My ears are as thirsty to listen as was my throat thirsty

last night. And here to-day, behold, I am, as that Englishman who

came here in his yacht used to say, I am in fine form, in devilish

fine form."

"I give you up," I retorted, shrugging my shoulders. "Only one

thing is clear, and that is that the devil doesn't want you.

Report of your singing has gone before you."

"No," he pondered the idea carefully. "It is not that. The devil

will be glad for my coming, for I have some very fine songs for

him, and scandals and old gossips of the high aliis that will make

him scratch his sides. So, let me explain to you the secret of my

birth. The Sea is my mother. I was born in a double-canoe, during

a Kona gale, in the channel of Kahoolawe. From her, the Sea, my

mother, I received my strength. Whenever I return to her arms, as

for a breast-clasp, as I have returned this day, I grow strong

again and immediately. She, to me, is the milk-giver, the life-

source--"

"Shades of Antaeus!" thought I.

"Some day," old Kohokumu rambled on, "when I am really old, I shall

be reported of men as drowned in the sea. This will be an idle

thought of men. In truth, I shall have returned into the arms of

my mother, there to rest under the heart of her breast until the

second birth of me, when I shall emerge into the sun a flashing

youth of splendour like Maui himself when he was golden young."

"A queer religion," I commented.

"When I was younger I muddled my poor head over queerer religions,"

old Kohokumu retorted. "But listen, O Young Wise One, to my

elderly wisdom. This I know: as I grow old I seek less for the

truth from without me, and find more of the truth from within me.

Why have I thought this thought of my return to my mother and of my

rebirth from my mother into the sun? You do not know. I do not

know, save that, without whisper of man's voice or printed word,

without prompting from otherwhere, this thought has arisen from

within me, from the deeps of me that are as deep as the sea. I am

not a god. I do not make things. Therefore I have not made this

thought. I do not know its father or its mother. It is of old

time before me, and therefore it is true. Man does not make truth.

Man, if he be not blind, only recognizes truth when he sees it. Is

this thought that I have thought a dream?"

"Perhaps it is you that are a dream," I laughed. "And that I, and

sky, and sea, and the iron-hard land, are dreams, all dreams."

"I have often thought that," he assured me soberly. "It may well

be so. Last night I dreamed I was a lark bird, a beautiful singing

lark of the sky like the larks on the upland pastures of Haleakala.

And I flew up, up, toward the sun, singing, singing, as old

Kohokumu never sang. I tell you now that I dreamed I was a lark

bird singing in the sky. But may not I, the real I, be the lark

bird? And may not the telling of it be the dream that I, the lark

bird, am dreaming now? Who are you to tell me ay or no? Dare you

tell me I am not a lark bird asleep and dreaming that I am old

Kohokumu?"

I shrugged my shoulders, and he continued triumphantly:

"And how do you know but what you are old Maui himself asleep and

dreaming that you are John Lakana talking with me in a canoe? And

may you not awake old Maui yourself, and scratch your sides and say

that you had a funny dream in which you dreamed you were a haole?"

"I don't know," I admitted. "Besides, you wouldn't believe me."

"There is much more in dreams than we know," he assured me with

great solemnity. "Dreams go deep, all the way down, maybe to

before the beginning. May not old Maui have only dreamed he pulled

Hawaii up from the bottom of the sea? Then would this Hawaii land

be a dream, and you, and I, and the squid there, only parts of

Maui's dream? And the lark bird too?"

He sighed and let his head sink on his breast.

"And I worry my old head about the secrets undiscoverable," he

resumed, "until I grow tired and want to forget, and so I drink

swipes, and go fishing, and sing old songs, and dream I am a lark

bird singing in the sky. I like that best of all, and often I

dream it when I have drunk much swipes . . . "

In great dejection of mood he peered down into the lagoon through

the water-glass.

"There will be no more bites for a while," he announced. "The

fish-sharks are prowling around, and we shall have to wait until

they are gone. And so that the time shall not be heavy, I will

sing you the canoe-hauling song to Lono. You remember:

"Give to me the trunk of the tree, O Lono!

Give me the tree's main root, O Lono!

Give me the ear of the tree, O Lono!--"

"For the love of mercy, don't sing!" I cut him short. "I've got a

headache, and your singing hurts. You may be in devilish fine form

to-day, but your throat is rotten. I'd rather you talked about

dreams, or told me whoppers."

"It is too bad that you are sick, and you so young," he conceded

cheerily. "And I shall not sing any more. I shall tell you

something you do not know and have never heard; something that is

no dream and no whopper, but is what I know to have happened. Not

very long ago there lived here, on the beach beside this very

lagoon, a young boy whose name was Keikiwai, which, as you know,

means Water Baby. He was truly a water baby. His gods were the

sea and fish gods, and he was born with knowledge of the language

of fishes, which the fishes did not know until the sharks found it

out one day when they heard him talk it.

"It happened this way. The word had been brought, and the

commands, by swift runners, that the king was making a progress

around the island, and that on the next day a luau" (feast) "was to

be served him by the dwellers here of Waihee. It was always a

hardship, when the king made a progress, for the few dwellers in

small places to fill his many stomachs with food. For he came

always with his wife and her women, with his priests and sorcerers,

his dancers and flute-players, and hula-singers, and fighting men

and servants, and his high chiefs with their wives, and sorcerers,

and fighting men, and servants.

"Sometimes, in small places like Waihee, the path of his journey

was marked afterward by leanness and famine. But a king must be

fed, and it is not good to anger a king. So, like warning in

advance of disaster, Waihee heard of his coming, and all food-

getters of field and pond and mountain and sea were busied with

getting food for the feast. And behold, everything was got, from

the choicest of royal taro to sugar-cane joints for the roasting,

from opihis to limu, from fowl to wild pig and poi-fed puppies--

everything save one thing. The fishermen failed to get lobsters.

"Now be it known that the king's favourite food was lobster. He

esteemed it above all kai-kai" (food), "and his runners had made

special mention of it. And there were no lobsters, and it is not

good to anger a king in the belly of him. Too many sharks had come

inside the reef. That was the trouble. A young girl and an old

man had been eaten by them. And of the young men who dared dive

for lobsters, one was eaten, and one lost an arm, and another lost

one hand and one foot.

"But there was Keikiwai, the Water Baby, only eleven years old, but

half fish himself and talking the language of fishes. To his

father the head men came, begging him to send the Water Baby to get

lobsters to fill the king's belly and divert his anger.

"Now this what happened was known and observed. For the fishermen,

and their women, and the taro-growers and the bird-catchers, and

the head men, and all Waihee, came down and stood back from the

edge of the rock where the Water Baby stood and looked down at the

lobsters far beneath on the bottom.

"And a shark, looking up with its cat's eyes, observed him, and

sent out the shark-call of 'fresh meat' to assemble all the sharks

in the lagoon. For the sharks work thus together, which is why

they are strong. And the sharks answered the call till there were

forty of them, long ones and short ones and lean ones and round

ones, forty of them by count; and they talked to one another,

saying: 'Look at that titbit of a child, that morsel delicious of

human-flesh sweetness without the salt of the sea in it, of which

salt we have too much, savoury and good to eat, melting to delight

under our hearts as our bellies embrace it and extract from it its

sweet.'

"Much more they said, saying: 'He has come for the lobsters. When

he dives in he is for one of us. Not like the old man we ate

yesterday, tough to dryness with age, nor like the young men whose

members were too hard-muscled, but tender, so tender that he will

melt in our gullets ere our bellies receive him. When he dives in,

we will all rush for him, and the lucky one of us will get him,

and, gulp, he will be gone, one bite and one swallow, into the

belly of the luckiest one of us.'

"And Keikiwai, the Water Baby, heard the conspiracy, knowing the

shark language; and he addressed a prayer, in the shark language,

to the shark god Moku-halii, and the sharks heard and waved their

tails to one another and winked their cat's eyes in token that they

understood his talk. And then he said: 'I shall now dive for a

lobster for the king. And no hurt shall befall me, because the

shark with the shortest tail is my friend and will protect me.

"And, so saying, he picked up a chunk of lava-rock and tossed it

into the water, with a big splash, twenty feet to one side. The

forty sharks rushed for the splash, while he dived, and by the time

they discovered they had missed him, he had gone to bottom and come

back and climbed out, within his hand a fat lobster, a wahine

lobster, full of eggs, for the king.

"'Ha!' said the sharks, very angry. 'There is among us a traitor.

The titbit of a child, the morsel of sweetness, has spoken, and has

exposed the one among us who has saved him. Let us now measure the

lengths of our tails!

"Which they did, in a long row, side by side, the shorter-tailed

ones cheating and stretching to gain length on themselves, the

longer-tailed ones cheating and stretching in order not to be out-

cheated and out-stretched. They were very angry with the one with

the shortest tail, and him they rushed upon from every side and

devoured till nothing was left of him.

"Again they listened while they waited for the Water Baby to dive

in. And again the Water Baby made his prayer in the shark language

to Moku-halii, and said: 'The shark with the shortest tail is my

friend and will protect me.' And again the Water Baby tossed in a

chunk of lava, this time twenty feet away off to the other side.

The sharks rushed for the splash, and in their haste ran into one

another, and splashed with their tails till the water was all foam,

and they could see nothing, each thinking some other was swallowing

the titbit. And the Water Baby came up and climbed out with

another fat lobster for the king.

"And the thirty-nine sharks measured tails, devoting the one with

the shortest tail, so that there were only thirty-eight sharks.

And the Water Baby continued to do what I have said, and the sharks

to do what I have told you, while for each shark that was eaten by

his brothers there was another fat lobster laid on the rock for the

king. Of course, there was much quarrelling and argument among the

sharks when it came to measuring tails; but in the end it worked

out in rightness and justice, for, when only two sharks were left,

they were the two biggest of the original forty.

"And the Water Baby again claimed the shark with the shortest tail

was his friend, fooled the two sharks with another lava-chunk, and

brought up another lobster. The two sharks each claimed the other

had the shorter tail, and each fought to eat the other, and the one

with the longer tail won--"

"Hold, O Kohokumu!" I interrupted. "Remember that that shark had

already--"

"I know just what you are going to say," he snatched his recital

back from me. "And you are right. It took him so long to eat the

thirty-ninth shark, for inside the thirty-ninth shark were already

the nineteen other sharks he had eaten, and inside the fortieth

shark were already the nineteen other sharks he had eaten, and he

did not have the appetite he had started with. But do not forget

he was a very big shark to begin with.

"It took him so long to eat the other shark, and the nineteen

sharks inside the other shark, that he was still eating when

darkness fell, and the people of Waihee went away home with all the

lobsters for the king. And didn't they find the last shark on the

beach next morning dead, and burst wide open with all he had

eaten?"

Kohokumu fetched a full stop and held my eyes with his own shrewd

ones.

"Hold, O Lakana!" he checked the speech that rushed to my tongue.

"I know what next you would say. You would say that with my own

eyes I did not see this, and therefore that I do not know what I

have been telling you. But I do know, and I can prove it. My

father's father knew the grandson of the Water Baby's father's

uncle. Also, there, on the rocky point to which I point my finger

now, is where the Water Baby stood and dived. I have dived for

lobsters there myself. It is a great place for lobsters. Also,

and often, have I seen sharks there. And there, on the bottom, as

I should know, for I have seen and counted them, are the thirty-

nine lava-rocks thrown in by the Water Baby as I have described."

"But--" I began.

"Ha!" he baffled me. "Look! While we have talked the fish have

begun again to bite."

He pointed to three of the bamboo poles erect and devil-dancing in

token that fish were hooked and struggling on the lines beneath.

As he bent to his paddle, he muttered, for my benefit:

"Of course I know. The thirty-nine lava rocks are still there.

You can count them any day for yourself. Of course I know, and I

know for a fact."

GLEN ELLEN.

October 2, 1916.

THE TEARS OF AH KIM

There was a great noise and racket, but no scandal, in Honolulu's

Chinatown. Those within hearing distance merely shrugged their

shoulders and smiled tolerantly at the disturbance as an affair of

accustomed usualness. "What is it?" asked Chin Mo, down with a

sharp pleurisy, of his wife, who had paused for a second at the

open window to listen.

"Only Ah Kim," was her reply. "His mother is beating him again."

The fracas was taking place in the garden, behind the living rooms

that were at the back of the store that fronted on the street with

the proud sign above: AH KIM COMPANY, GENERAL MERCHANDISE. The

garden was a miniature domain, twenty feet square, that somehow

cunningly seduced the eye into a sense and seeming of illimitable

vastness. There were forests of dwarf pines and oaks, centuries

old yet two or three feet in height, and imported at enormous care

and expense. A tiny bridge, a pace across, arched over a miniature

river that flowed with rapids and cataracts from a miniature lake

stocked with myriad-finned, orange-miracled goldfish that in

proportion to the lake and landscape were whales. On every side

the many windows of the several-storied shack-buildings looked

down. In the centre of the garden, on the narrow gravelled walk

close beside the lake Ah Kim was noisily receiving his beating.

No Chinese lad of tender and beatable years was Ah Kim. His was

the store of Ah Kim Company, and his was the achievement of

building it up through the long years from the shoestring of

savings of a contract coolie labourer to a bank account in four

figures and a credit that was gilt edged. An even half-century of

summers and winters had passed over his head, and, in the passing,

fattened him comfortably and snugly. Short of stature, his full

front was as rotund as a water-melon seed. His face was moon-

faced. His garb was dignified and silken, and his black-silk

skull-cap with the red button atop, now, alas! fallen on the

ground, was the skull-cap worn by the successful and dignified

merchants of his race.

But his appearance, in this moment of the present, was anything but

dignified. Dodging and ducking under a rain of blows from a bamboo

cane, he was crouched over in a half-doubled posture. When he was

rapped on the knuckles and elbows, with which he shielded his face

and head, his winces were genuine and involuntary. From the many

surrounding windows the neighbourhood looked down with placid

enjoyment.

And she who wielded the stick so shrewdly from long practice!

Seventy-four years old, she looked every minute of her time. Her

thin legs were encased in straight-lined pants of linen stiff-

textured and shiny-black. Her scraggly grey hair was drawn

unrelentingly and flatly back from a narrow, unrelenting forehead.

Eyebrows she had none, having long since shed them. Her eyes, of

pin-hole tininess, were blackest black. She was shockingly

cadaverous. Her shrivelled forearm, exposed by the loose sleeve,

possessed no more of muscle than several taut bowstrings stretched

across meagre bone under yellow, parchment-like skin. Along this

mummy arm jade bracelets shot up and down and clashed with every

blow.

"Ah!" she cried out, rhythmically accenting her blows in series of

three to each shrill observation. "I forbade you to talk to Li

Faa. To-day you stopped on the street with her. Not an hour ago.

Half an hour by the clock you talked.--What is that?"

"It was the thrice-accursed telephone," Ah Kim muttered, while she

suspended the stick to catch what he said. "Mrs. Chang Lucy told

you. I know she did. I saw her see me. I shall have the

telephone taken out. It is of the devil."

"It is a device of all the devils," Mrs. Tai Fu agreed, taking a

fresh grip on the stick. "Yet shall the telephone remain. I like

to talk with Mrs. Chang Lucy over the telephone."

"She has the eyes of ten thousand cats," quoth Ah Kim, ducking and

receiving the stick stinging on his knuckles. "And the tongues of

ten thousand toads," he supplemented ere his next duck.

"She is an impudent-faced and evil-mannered hussy," Mrs. Tai Fu

accented.

"Mrs. Chang Lucy was ever that," Ah Kim murmured like the dutiful

son he was.

"I speak of Li Faa," his mother corrected with stick emphasis.

"She is only half Chinese, as you know. Her mother was a shameless

kanaka. She wears skirts like the degraded haole women--also

corsets, as I have seen for myself. Where are her children? Yet

has she buried two husbands."

"The one was drowned, the other kicked by a horse," Ah Kim

qualified.

"A year of her, unworthy son of a noble father, and you would

gladly be going out to get drowned or be kicked by a horse."

Subdued chucklings and laughter from the window audience applauded

her point.

"You buried two husbands yourself, revered mother," Ah Kim was

stung to retort.

"I had the good taste not to marry a third. Besides, my two

husbands died honourably in their beds. They were not kicked by

horses nor drowned at sea. What business is it of our neighbours

that you should inform them I have had two husbands, or ten, or

none? You have made a scandal of me, before all our neighbours,

and for that I shall now give you a real beating."

Ah Kim endured the staccato rain of blows, and said when his mother

paused, breathless and weary:

"Always have I insisted and pleaded, honourable mother, that you

beat me in the house, with the windows and doors closed tight, and

not in the open street or the garden open behind the house.

"You have called this unthinkable Li Faa the Silvery Moon Blossom,"

Mrs. Tai Fu rejoined, quite illogically and femininely, but with

utmost success in so far as she deflected her son from continuance

of the thrust he had so swiftly driven home.

"Mrs. Chang Lucy told you," he charged.

"I was told over the telephone," his mother evaded. "I do not know

all voices that speak to me over that contrivance of all the

devils."

Strangely, Ah Kim made no effort to run away from his mother, which

he could easily have done. She, on the other hand, found fresh

cause for more stick blows.

"Ah! Stubborn one! Why do you not cry? Mule that shameth its

ancestors! Never have I made you cry. From the time you were a

little boy I have never made you cry. Answer me! Why do you not

cry?"

Weak and breathless from her exertions, she dropped the stick and

panted and shook as if with a nervous palsy.

"I do not know, except that it is my way," Ah Kim replied, gazing

solicitously at his mother. "I shall bring you a chair now, and

you will sit down and rest and feel better."

But she flung away from him with a snort and tottered agedly across

the garden into the house. Meanwhile recovering his skull-cap and

smoothing his disordered attire, Ah Kim rubbed his hurts and gazed

after her with eyes of devotion. He even smiled, and almost might

it appear that he had enjoyed the beating.

Ah Kim had been so beaten ever since he was a boy, when he lived on

the high banks of the eleventh cataract of the Yangtse river. Here

his father had been born and toiled all his days from young manhood

as a towing coolie. When he died, Ah Kim, in his own young

manhood, took up the same honourable profession. Farther back than

all remembered annals of the family, had the males of it been

towing coolies. At the time of Christ his direct ancestors had

been doing the same thing, meeting the precisely similarly modelled

junks below the white water at the foot of the canyon, bending the

half-mile of rope to each junk, and, according to size, tailing on

from a hundred to two hundred coolies of them and by sheer, two-

legged man-power, bowed forward and down till their hands touched

the ground and their faces were sometimes within a foot of it,

dragging the junk up through the white water to the head of the

canyon.

Apparently, down all the intervening centuries, the payment of the

trade had not picked up. His father, his father's father, and

himself, Ah Kim, had received the same invariable remuneration--per

junk one-fourteenth of a cent, at the rate he had since learned

money was valued in Hawaii. On long lucky summer days when the

waters were easy, the junks many, the hours of daylight sixteen,

sixteen hours of such heroic toil would earn over a cent. But in a

whole year a towing coolie did not earn more than a dollar and a

half. People could and did live on such an income. There were

women servants who received a yearly wage of a dollar. The net-

makers of Ti Wi earned between a dollar and two dollars a year.

They lived on such wages, or, at least, they did not die on them.

But for the towing coolies there were pickings, which were what

made the profession honourable and the guild a close and hereditary

corporation or labour union. One junk in five that was dragged up

through the rapids or lowered down was wrecked. One junk in every

ten was a total loss. The coolies of the towing guild knew the

freaks and whims of the currents, and grappled, and raked, and

netted a wet harvest from the river. They of the guild were looked

up to by lesser coolies, for they could afford to drink brick tea

and eat number four rice every day.

And Ah Kim had been contented and proud, until, one bitter spring

day of driving sleet and hail, he dragged ashore a drowning

Cantonese sailor. It was this wanderer, thawing out by his fire,

who first named the magic name Hawaii to him. He had himself never

been to that labourer's paradise, said the sailor; but many Chinese

had gone there from Canton, and he had heard the talk of their

letters written back. In Hawaii was never frost nor famine. The

very pigs, never fed, were ever fat of the generous offal disdained

by man. A Cantonese or Yangtse family could live on the waste of

an Hawaii coolie. And wages! In gold dollars, ten a month, or, in

trade dollars, two a month, was what the contract Chinese coolie

received from the white-devil sugar kings. In a year the coolie

received the prodigious sum of two hundred and forty trade dollars-

-more than a hundred times what a coolie, toiling ten times as

hard, received on the eleventh cataract of the Yangtse. In short,

all things considered, an Hawaii coolie was one hundred times

better off, and, when the amount of labour was estimated, a

thousand times better off. In addition was the wonderful climate.

When Ah Kim was twenty-four, despite his mother's pleadings and

beatings, he resigned from the ancient and honourable guild of the

eleventh cataract towing coolies, left his mother to go into a boss

coolie's household as a servant for a dollar a year, and an annual

dress to cost not less than thirty cents, and himself departed down

the Yangtse to the great sea. Many were his adventures and severe

his toils and hardships ere, as a salt-sea junk-sailor, he won to

Canton. When he was twenty-six he signed five years of his life

and labour away to the Hawaii sugar kings and departed, one of

eight hundred contract coolies, for that far island land, on a

festering steamer run by a crazy captain and drunken officers and

rejected of Lloyds.

Honourable, among labourers, had Ah Kim's rating been as a towing

coolie. In Hawaii, receiving a hundred times more pay, he found

himself looked down upon as the lowest of the low--a plantation

coolie, than which could be nothing lower. But a coolie whose

ancestors had towed junks up the eleventh cataract of the Yangtse

since before the birth of Christ inevitably inherits one character

in large degree, namely, the character of patience. This patience

was Ah Kim's. At the end of five years, his compulsory servitude

over, thin as ever in body, in bank account he lacked just ten

trade dollars of possessing a thousand trade dollars.

On this sum he could have gone back to the Yangtse and retired for

life a really wealthy man. He would have possessed a larger sum,

had he not, on occasion, conservatively played che fa and fan tan,

and had he not, for a twelve-month, toiled among the centipedes and

scorpions of the stifling cane-fields in the semi-dream of a

continuous opium debauch. Why he had not toiled the whole five

years under the spell of opium was the expensiveness of the habit.

He had had no moral scruples. The drug had cost too much.

But Ah Kim did not return to China. He had observed the business

life of Hawaii and developed a vaulting ambition. For six months,

in order to learn business and English at the bottom, he clerked in

the plantation store. At the end of this time he knew more about

that particular store than did ever plantation manager know about

any plantation store. When he resigned his position he was

receiving forty gold a month, or eighty trade, and he was beginning

to put on flesh. Also, his attitude toward mere contract coolies

had become distinctively aristocratic. The manager offered to

raise him to sixty fold, which, by the year, would constitute a

fabulous fourteen hundred and forty trade, or seven hundred times

his annual earning on the Yangtse as a two-legged horse at one-

fourteenth of a gold cent per junk.

Instead of accepting, Ah Kim departed to Honolulu, and in the big

general merchandise store of Fong & Chow Fong began at the bottom

for fifteen gold per month. He worked a year and a half, and

resigned when he was thirty-three, despite the seventy-five gold

per month his Chinese employers were paying him. Then it was that

he put up his own sign: AH KIM COMPANY, GENERAL MERCHANDISE.

Also, better fed, there was about his less meagre figure a

foreshadowing of the melon-seed rotundity that was to attach to him

in future years.

With the years he prospered increasingly, so that, when he was

thirty-six, the promise of his figure was fulfilling rapidly, and,

himself a member of the exclusive and powerful Hai Gum Tong, and of

the Chinese Merchants' Association, he was accustomed to sitting as

host at dinners that cost him as much as thirty years of towing on

the eleventh cataract would have earned him. Two things he missed:

a wife, and his mother to lay the stick on him as of yore.

When he was thirty-seven he consulted his bank balance. It stood

him three thousand gold. For twenty-five hundred down and an easy

mortgage he could buy the three-story shack-building, and the

ground in fee simple on which it stood. But to do this, left only

five hundred for a wife. Fu Yee Po had a marriageable, properly

small-footed daughter whom he was willing to import from China, and

sell to him for eight hundred gold, plus the costs of importation.

Further, Fu Yee Po was even willing to take five hundred down and

the remainder on note at 6 per cent.

Ah Kim, thirty-seven years of age, fat and a bachelor, really did

want a wife, especially a small-footed wife; for, China born and

reared, the immemorial small-footed female had been deeply

impressed into his fantasy of woman. But more, even more and far

more than a small-footed wife, did he want his mother and his

mother's delectable beatings. So he declined Fu Yee Po's easy

terms, and at much less cost imported his own mother from servant

in a boss coolie's house at a yearly wage of a dollar and a thirty-

cent dress to be mistress of his Honolulu three-story shack

building with two household servants, three clerks, and a porter of

all work under her, to say nothing of ten thousand dollars' worth

of dress goods on the shelves that ranged from the cheapest cotton

crepes to the most expensive hand-embroidered silks. For be it

known that even in that early day Ah Kim's emporium was beginning

to cater to the tourist trade from the States.

For thirteen years Ah Kim had lived tolerably happily with his

mother, and by her been methodically beaten for causes just or

unjust, real or fancied; and at the end of it all he knew as

strongly as ever the ache of his heart and head for a wife, and of

his loins for sons to live after him, and carry on the dynasty of

Ah Kim Company. Such the dream that has ever vexed men, from those

early ones who first usurped a hunting right, monopolized a sandbar

for a fish-trap, or stormed a village and put the males thereof to

the sword. Kings, millionaires, and Chinese merchants of Honolulu

have this in common, despite that they may praise God for having

made them differently and in self-likable images.

And the ideal of woman that Ah Kim at fifty ached for had changed

from his ideal at thirty-seven. No small-footed wife did he want

now, but a free, natural, out-stepping normal-footed woman that,

somehow, appeared to him in his day dreams and haunted his night

visions in the form of Li Faa, the Silvery Moon Blossom. What if

she were twice widowed, the daughter of a kanaka mother, the wearer

of white-devil skirts and corsets and high-heeled slippers! He

wanted her. It seemed it was written that she should be joint

ancestor with him of the line that would continue the ownership and

management through the generations, of Ah Kim Company, General

Merchandise.

"I will have no half-pake daughter-in-law," his mother often

reiterated to Ah Kim, pake being the Hawaiian word for Chinese.

"All pake must my daughter-in-law be, even as you, my son, and as

I, your mother. And she must wear trousers, my son, as all the

women of our family before her. No woman, in she-devil skirts and

corsets, can pay due reverence to our ancestors. Corsets and

reverence do not go together. Such a one is this shameless Li Faa.

She is impudent and independent, and will be neither obedient to

her husband nor her husband's mother. This brazen-faced Li Faa

would believe herself the source of life and the first ancestor,

recognizing no ancestors before her. She laughs at our joss-

sticks, and paper prayers, and family gods, as I have been well

told--"

"Mrs. Chang Lucy," Ah Kim groaned.

"Not alone Mrs. Chang Lucy, O son. I have inquired. At least a

dozen have heard her say of our joss house that it is all monkey

foolishness. The words are hers--she, who eats raw fish, raw

squid, and baked dog. Ours is the foolishness of monkeys. Yet

would she marry you, a monkey, because of your store that is a

palace and of the wealth that makes you a great man. And she would

put shame on me, and on your father before you long honourably

dead."

And there was no discussing the matter. As things were, Ah Kim

knew his mother was right. Not for nothing had Li Faa been born

forty years before of a Chinese father, renegade to all tradition,

and of a kanaka mother whose immediate forebears had broken the

taboos, cast down their own Polynesian gods, and weak-heartedly

listened to the preaching about the remote and unimageable god of

the Christian missionaries. Li Faa, educated, who could read and

write English and Hawaiian and a fair measure of Chinese, claimed

to believe in nothing, although in her secret heart she feared the

kahunas (Hawaiian witch-doctors), who she was certain could charm

away ill luck or pray one to death. Li Faa would never come into

Ah Kim's house, as he thoroughly knew, and kow-tow to his mother

and be slave to her in the immemorial Chinese way. Li Faa, from

the Chinese angle, was a new woman, a feminist, who rode horseback

astride, disported immodestly garbed at Waikiki on the surf-boards,

and at more than one luau (feast) had been known to dance the hula

with the worst and in excess of the worst, to the scandalous

delight of all.

Ah Kim himself, a generation younger than his mother, had been

bitten by the acid of modernity. The old order held, in so far as

he still felt in his subtlest crypts of being the dusty hand of the

past resting on him, residing in him; yet he subscribed to heavy

policies of fire and life insurance, acted as treasurer for the

local Chinese revolutionises that were for turning the Celestial

Empire into a republic, contributed to the funds of the Hawaii-born

Chinese baseball nine that excelled the Yankee nines at their own

game, talked theosophy with Katso Suguri, the Japanese Buddhist and

silk importer, fell for police graft, played and paid his insidious

share in the democratic politics of annexed Hawaii, and was

thinking of buying an automobile. Ah Kim never dared bare himself

to himself and thrash out and winnow out how much of the old he had

ceased to believe in. His mother was of the old, yet he revered

her and was happy under her bamboo stick. Li Faa, the Silvery Moon

Blossom, was of the new, yet he could never be quite completely

happy without her.

For he loved Li Faa. Moon-faced, rotund as a water-melon seed,

canny business man, wise with half a century of living--

nevertheless Ah Kim became an artist when he thought of her. He

thought of her in poems of names, as woman transmuted into flower-

terms of beauty and philosophic abstractions of achievement and

easement. She was, to him, and alone to him of all men in the

world, his Plum Blossom, his Tranquillity of Woman, his Flower of

Serenity, his Moon Lily, and his Perfect Rest. And as he murmured

these love endearments of namings, it seemed to him that in them

were the ripplings of running waters, the tinklings of silver wind-

bells, and the scents of the oleander and the jasmine. She was his

poem of woman, a lyric delight, a three-dimensions of flesh and

spirit delicious, a fate and a good fortune written, ere the first

man and woman were, by the gods whose whim had been to make all men

and women for sorrow and for joy.

But his mother put into his hand the ink-brush and placed under it,

on the table, the writing tablet.

"Paint," said she, "the ideograph of TO MARRY."

He obeyed, scarcely wondering, with the deft artistry of his race

and training painting the symbolic hieroglyphic.

"Resolve it," commanded his mother.

Ah Kim looked at her, curious, willing to please, unaware of the

drift of her intent.

"Of what is it composed?" she persisted. "What are the three

originals, the sum of which is it: to marry, marriage, the coming

together and wedding of a man and a woman? Paint them, paint them

apart, the three originals, unrelated, so that we may know how the

wise men of old wisely built up the ideograph of to marry."

And Ah Kim, obeying and painting, saw that what he had painted were

three picture-signs--the picture-signs of a hand, an ear, and a

woman.

"Name them," said his mother; and he named them.

"It is true," said she. "It is a great tale. It is the stuff of

the painted pictures of marriage. Such marriage was in the

beginning; such shall it always be in my house. The hand of the

man takes the woman's ear, and by it leads her away to his house,

where she is to be obedient to him and to his mother. I was taken

by the ear, so, by your long honourably dead father. I have looked

at your hand. It is not like his hand. Also have I looked at the

ear of Li Faa. Never will you lead her by the ear. She has not

that kind of an ear. I shall live a long time yet, and I will be

mistress in my son's house, after our ancient way, until I die."

"But she is my revered ancestress," Ah Kim explained to Li Faa.

He was timidly unhappy; for Li Faa, having ascertained that Mrs.

Tai Fu was at the temple of the Chinese AEsculapius making a food

offering of dried duck and prayers for her declining health, had

taken advantage of the opportunity to call upon him in his store.

Li Faa pursed her insolent, unpainted lips into the form of a half-

opened rosebud, and replied:

"That will do for China. I do not know China. This is Hawaii, and

in Hawaii the customs of all foreigners change."

"She is nevertheless my ancestress," Ah Kim protested, "the mother

who gave me birth, whether I am in China or Hawaii, O Silvery Moon

Blossom that I want for wife."

"I have had two husbands," Li Faa stated placidly. "One was a

pake, one was a Portuguese. I learned much from both. Also am I

educated. I have been to High School, and I have played the piano

in public. And I learned from my two husbands much. The pake

makes the best husband. Never again will I marry anything but a

pake. But he must not take me by the ear--"

"How do you know of that?" he broke in suspiciously.

"Mrs. Chang Lucy," was the reply. "Mrs. Chang Lucy tells me

everything that your mother tells her, and your mother tells her

much. So let me tell you that mine is not that kind of an ear."

"Which is what my honoured mother has told me," Ah Kim groaned.

"Which is what your honoured mother told Mrs. Chang Lucy, which is

what Mrs. Chang Lucy told me," Li Faa completed equably. "And I

now tell you, O Third Husband To Be, that the man is not born who

will lead me by the ear. It is not the way in Hawaii. I will go

only hand in hand with my man, side by side, fifty-fifty as is the

haole slang just now. My Portuguese husband thought different. He

tried to beat me. I landed him three times in the police court and

each time he worked out his sentence on the reef. After that he

got drowned."

"My mother has been my mother for fifty years," Ah Kim declared

stoutly.

"And for fifty years has she beaten you," Li Faa giggled. "How my

father used to laugh at Yap Ten Shin! Like you, Yap Ten Shin had

been born in China, and had brought the China customs with him.

His old father was for ever beating him with a stick. He loved his

father. But his father beat him harder than ever when he became a

missionary pake. Every time he went to the missionary services,

his father beat him. And every time the missionary heard of it he

was harsh in his language to Yap Ten Shin for allowing his father

to beat him. And my father laughed and laughed, for my father was

a very liberal pake, who had changed his customs quicker than most

foreigners. And all the trouble was because Yap Ten Shin had a

loving heart. He loved his honourable father. He loved the God of

Love of the Christian missionary. But in the end, in me, he found

the greatest love of all, which is the love of woman. In me he

forgot his love for his father and his love for the loving Christ.

"And he offered my father six hundred gold, for me--the price was

small because my feet were not small. But I was half kanaka. I

said that I was not a slave-woman, and that I would be sold to no

man. My high-school teacher was a haole old maid who said love of

woman was so beyond price that it must never be sold. Perhaps that

is why she was an old maid. She was not beautiful. She could not

give herself away. My kanaka mother said it was not the kanaka way

to sell their daughters for a money price. They gave their

daughters for love, and she would listen to reason if Yap Ten Shin

provided luaus in quantity and quality. My pake father, as I have

told you, was liberal. He asked me if I wanted Yap Ten Shin for my

husband. And I said yes; and freely, of myself, I went to him. He

it was who was kicked by a horse; but he was a very good husband

before he was kicked by the horse.

"As for you, Ah Kim, you shall always be honourable and lovable for

me, and some day, when it is not necessary for you to take me by

the ear, I shall marry you and come here and be with you always,

and you will be the happiest pake in all Hawaii; for I have had two

husbands, and gone to high school, and am most wise in making a

husband happy. But that will be when your mother has ceased to

beat you. Mrs. Chang Lucy tells me that she beats you very hard."

"She does," Ah Kim affirmed. "Behold! He thrust back his loose

sleeves, exposing to the elbow his smooth and cherubic forearms.

They were mantled with black and blue marks that advertised the

weight and number of blows so shielded from his head and face.

"But she has never made me cry," Ah Kim disclaimed hastily.

"Never, from the time I was a little boy, has she made me cry."

"So Mrs. Chang Lucy says," Li Faa observed. "She says that your

honourable mother often complains to her that she has never made

you cry."

A sibilant warning from one of his clerks was too late. Having

regained the house by way of the back alley, Mrs. Tai Fu emerged

right upon them from out of the living apartments. Never had Ah

Kim seen his mother's eyes so blazing furious. She ignored Li Faa,

as she screamed at him:

"Now will I make you cry. As never before shall I beat you until

you do cry."

"Then let us go into the back rooms, honourable mother," Ah Kim

suggested. "We will close the windows and the doors, and there may

you beat me."

"No. Here shall you be beaten before all the world and this

shameless woman who would, with her own hand, take you by the ear

and call such sacrilege marriage! Stay, shameless woman."

"I am going to stay anyway," said Li Faa. She favoured the clerks

with a truculent stare. "And I'd like to see anything less than

the police put me out of here."

"You will never be my daughter-in-law," Mrs. Tai Fu snapped.

Li Faa nodded her head in agreement.

"But just the same," she added, "shall your son be my third

husband."

"You mean when I am dead?" the old mother screamed.

"The sun rises each morning," Li Faa said enigmatically. "All my

life have I seen it rise--"

"You are forty, and you wear corsets."

"But I do not dye my hair--that will come later," Li Faa calmly

retorted. "As to my age, you are right. I shall be forty-one next

Kamehameha Day. For forty years I have seen the sun rise. My

father was an old man. Before he died he told me that he had

observed no difference in the rising of the sun since when he was a

little boy. The world is round. Confucius did not know that, but

you will find it in all the geography books. The world is round.

Ever it turns over on itself, over and over and around and around.

And the times and seasons of weather and life turn with it. What

is, has been before. What has been, will be again. The time of

the breadfruit and the mango ever recurs, and man and woman repeat

themselves. The robins nest, and in the springtime the plovers

come from the north. Every spring is followed by another spring.

The coconut palm rises into the air, ripens its fruit, and departs.

But always are there more coconut palms. This is not all my own

smart talk. Much of it my father told me. Proceed, honourable

Mrs. Tai Fu, and beat your son who is my Third Husband To Be. But

I shall laugh. I warn you I shall laugh."

Ah Kim dropped down on his knees so as to give his mother every

advantage. And while she rained blows upon him with the bamboo

stick, Li Faa smiled and giggled, and finally burst into laughter.

"Harder, O honourable Mrs. Tai Fu!" Li Faa urged between paroxysms

of mirth.

Mrs. Tai Fu did her best, which was notably weak, until she

observed what made her drop the stick by her side in amazement. Ah

Kim was crying. Down both cheeks great round tears were coursing.

Li Faa was amazed. So were the gaping clerks. Most amazed of all

was Ah Kim, yet he could not help himself; and, although no further

blows fell, he cried steadily on.

"But why did you cry?" Li Faa demanded often of Ah Kim. "It was so

perfectly foolish a thing to do. She was not even hurting you."

"Wait until we are married," was Ah Kim's invariable reply, "and

then, O Moon Lily, will I tell you."

Two years later, one afternoon, more like a water-melon seed in

configuration than ever, Ah Kim returned home from a meeting of the

Chinese Protective Association, to find his mother dead on her

couch. Narrower and more unrelenting than ever were the forehead

and the brushed-back hair. But on her face was a withered smile.

The gods had been kind. She had passed without pain.

He telephoned first of all to Li Faa's number but did not find her

until he called up Mrs. Chang Lucy. The news given, the marriage

was dated ahead with ten times the brevity of the old-line Chinese

custom. And if there be anything analogous to a bridesmaid in a

Chinese wedding, Mrs. Chang Lucy was just that.

"Why," Li Faa asked Ah Kim when alone with him on their wedding

night, "why did you cry when your mother beat you that day in the

store? You were so foolish. She was not even hurting you."

"That is why I cried," answered Ah Kim.

Li Faa looked up at him without understanding.

"I cried," he explained, "because I suddenly knew that my mother

was nearing her end. There was no weight, no hurt, in her blows.

I cried because I knew SHE NO LONGER HAD STRENGTH ENOUGH TO HURT

ME. That is why I cried, my Flower of Serenity, my Perfect Rest.

That is the only reason why I cried."

WAIKIKI, HONOLULU.

June 16, 1916.

THE KANAKA SURF

The tourist women, under the hau tree arbour that lines the Moana

hotel beach, gasped when Lee Barton and his wife Ida emerged from

the bath-house. And as the pair walked past them and down to the

sand, they continued to gasp. Not that there was anything about

Lee Barton provocative of gasps. The tourist women were not of the

sort to gasp at sight of a mere man's swimming-suited body, no

matter with what swelling splendour of line and muscle such body

was invested. Nevertheless, trainers and conditioners of men would

have drawn deep breaths of satisfaction at contemplation of the

physical spectacle of him. But they would not have gasped in the

way the women did, whose gasps were indicative of moral shock.

Ida Barton was the cause of their perturbation and disapproval.

They disapproved, seriously so, at the first instant's glimpse of

her. They thought--such ardent self-deceivers were they--that they

were shocked by her swimming suit. But Freud has pointed out how

persons, where sex is involved, are prone sincerely to substitute

one thing for another thing, and to agonize over the substituted

thing as strenuously as if it were the real thing.

Ida Barton's swimming suit was a very nice one, as women's suits

go. Of thinnest of firm-woven black wool, with white trimmings and

a white belt-line, it was high-throated, short-sleeved, and brief-

skirted. Brief as was the skirt, the leg-tights were no less

brief. Yet on the beach in front of the adjacent Outrigger Club,

and entering and leaving the water, a score of women, not provoking

gasping notice, were more daringly garbed. Their men's suits, as

brief of leg-tights and skirts, fitted them as snugly, but were

sleeveless after the way of men's suits, the arm-holes deeply low-

cut and in-cut, and, by the exposed armpits, advertiseful that the

wearers were accustomed to 1916 decollete.

So it was not Ida Barton's suit, although the women deceived

themselves into thinking it was. It was, first of all, say her

legs; or, first of all, say the totality of her, the sweet and

brilliant jewel of her femininity bursting upon them. Dowager,

matron, and maid, conserving their soft-fat muscles or protecting

their hot-house complexions in the shade of the hau-tree arbour,

felt the immediate challenge of her. She was menace as well, an

affront of superiority in their own chosen and variously successful

game of life.

But they did not say it. They did not permit themselves to think

it. They thought it was the suit, and said so to one another,

ignoring the twenty women more daringly clad but less perilously

beautiful. Could one have winnowed out of the souls of these

disapproving ones what lay at bottom of their condemnation of her

suit, it would have been found to be the sex-jealous thought: THAT

NO WOMAN, SO BEAUTIFUL AS THIS ONE, SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO SHOW HER

BEAUTY. It was not fair to them. What chance had they in the

conquering of males with so dangerous a rival in the foreground?

They were justified. As Stanley Patterson said to his wife, where

the two of them lolled wet in the sand by the tiny fresh-water

stream that the Bartons waded in order to gain the Outrigger Club

beach:

"Lord god of models and marvels, behold them! My dear, did you

ever see two such legs on one small woman! Look at the roundness

and taperingness. They're boy's legs. I've seen featherweights go

into the ring with legs like those. And they're all-woman's legs,

too. Never mistake them in the world. The arc of the front line

of that upper leg! And the balanced adequate fullness at the back!

And the way the opposing curves slender in to the knee that IS a

knee! Makes my fingers itch. Wish I had some clay right now."

"It's a true human knee," his wife concurred, no less breathlessly;

for, like her husband, she was a sculptor. "Look at the joint of

it working under the skin. It's got form, and blessedly is not

covered by a bag of fat." She paused to sigh, thinking of her own

knees. "It's correct, and beautiful, and dainty. Charm! If ever

I beheld the charm of flesh, it is now. I wonder who she is."

Stanley Patterson, gazing ardently, took up his half of the chorus.

"Notice that the round muscle-pads on the inner sides that make

most women appear knock-kneed are missing. They're boy's legs,

firm and sure--"

"And sweet woman's legs, soft and round," his wife hastened to

balance. "And look, Stanley! See how she walks on the balls of

her feet. It makes her seem light as swan's down. Each step seems

just a little above the earth, and each other step seems just a

little higher above until you get the impression she is flying, or

just about to rise and begin flying . . . "

So Stanley and Mrs. Patterson. But they were artists, with eyes

therefore unlike the next batteries of human eyes Ida Barton was

compelled to run, and that laired on the Outrigger lanais

(verandas) and in the hau-tree shade of the closely adjoining

seaside. The majority of the Outrigger audience was composed, not

of tourist guests, but of club members and old-timers in Hawaii.

And even the old-times women gasped.

"It's positively indecent," said Mrs. Hanley Black to her husband,

herself a too-stout-in-the-middle matron of forty-five, who had

been born in the Hawaiian islands, and who had never heard of

Ostend.

Hanley Black surveyed his wife's criminal shapelessness and

voluminousness of antediluvian, New-England swimming dress with a

withering, contemplative eye. They had been married a sufficient

number of years for him frankly to utter his judgment.

"That strange woman's suit makes your own look indecent. You

appear as a creature shameful, under a grotesqueness of apparel

striving to hide some secret awfulness."

"She carries her body like a Spanish dancer," Mrs. Patterson said

to her husband, for the pair of them had waded the little stream in

pursuit of the vision.

"By George, she does," Stanley Patterson concurred. "Reminds me of

Estrellita. Torso just well enough forward, slender waist, not too

lean in the stomach, and with muscles like some lad boxer's

armouring that stomach to fearlessness. She has to have them to

carry herself that way and to balance the back muscles. See that

muscled curve of the back! It's Estrellita's."

"How tall would you say?" his wife queried.

"There she deceives," was the appraised answer. "She might be

five-feet-one, or five-feet-three or four. It's that way she has

of walking that you described as almost about to fly."

"Yes, that's it," Mrs. Patterson concurred. "It's her energy, her

seemingness of being on tip toe with rising vitality."

Stanley Patterson considered for a space.

"That's it," he enounced. "She IS a little thing. I'll give her

five-two in her stockings. And I'll weigh her a mere one hundred

and ten, or eight, or fifteen at the outside."

"She won't weigh a hundred and ten," his wife declared with

conviction.

"And with her clothes on, plus her carriage (which is builded of

her vitality and will), I'll wager she'd never impress any one with

her smallness."

"I know her type," his wife nodded. "You meet her out, and you

have the sense that, while not exactly a fine large woman, she's a

whole lot larger than the average. And now, age?"

"I'll give you best there," he parried.

"She might be twenty-five, she might be twenty-eight . . . "

But Stanley Patterson had impolitely forgotten to listen.

"It's not her legs alone," he cried on enthusiastically. "It's the

all of her. Look at the delicacy of that forearm. And the swell

of line to the shoulder. And that biceps! It's alive. Dollars to

drowned kittens she can flex a respectable knot of it . . . "

No woman, much less an Ida Barton, could have been unconscious of

the effect she was producing along Waikiki Beach. Instead of

making her happy in the small vanity way, it irritated her.

"The cats," she laughed to her husband. "And to think I was born

here an almost even third of a century ago! But they weren't nasty

then. Maybe because there weren't any tourists. Why, Lee, I

learned to swim right here on this beach in front of the Outrigger.

We used to come out with daddy for vacations and for week-ends and

sort of camp out in a grass house that stood right where the

Outrigger ladies serve tea now. And centipedes fell out of the

thatch on us, while we slept, and we all ate poi and opihis and raw

aku, and nobody wore much of anything for the swimming and

squidding, and there was no real road to town. I remember times of

big rain when it was so flooded we had to go in by canoe, out

through the reef and in by Honolulu Harbour."

"Remember," Lee Barton added, "it was just about that time that the

youngster that became me arrived here for a few weeks' stay on our

way around. I must have seen you on the beach at that very time--

one of the kiddies that swam like fishes. Why, merciful me, the

women here were all riding cross-saddle, and that was long before

the rest of the social female world outgrew its immodesty and came

around to sitting simultaneously on both sides of a horse. I

learned to swim on the beach here at that time myself. You and I

may even have tried body-surfing on the same waves, or I may have

splashed a handful of water into your mouth and been rewarded by

your sticking out your tongue at me--"

Interrupted by an audible gasp of shock from a spinster-appearing

female sunning herself hard by and angularly in the sand in a

swimming suit monstrously unbeautiful, Lee Barton was aware of an

involuntary and almost perceptible stiffening on the part of his

wife.

"I smile with pleasure," he told her. "It serves only to make your

valiant little shoulders the more valiant. It may make you self-

conscious, but it likewise makes you absurdly self-confident."

For, be it known in advance, Lee Barton was a super-man and Ida

Barton a super-woman--or at least they were personalities so

designated by the cub book-reviewers, flat-floor men and women, and

scholastically emasculated critics, who from across the dreary

levels of their living can descry no glorious humans over-topping

their horizons. These dreary folk, echoes of the dead past and

importunate and self-elected pall-bearers for the present and

future, proxy-livers of life and vicarious sensualists that they

are in a eunuch sort of way, insist, since their own selves,

environments, and narrow agitations of the quick are mediocre and

commonplace, that no man or woman can rise above the mediocre and

commonplace.

Lacking gloriousness in themselves, they deny gloriousness to all

mankind; too cowardly for whimsy and derring-do, they assert whimsy

and derring-do ceased at the very latest no later than the middle

ages; flickering little tapers themselves, their feeble eyes are

dazzled to unseeingness of the flaming conflagrations of other

souls that illumine their skies. Possessing power in no greater

quantity than is the just due of pygmies, they cannot conceive of

power greater in others than in themselves. In those days there

were giants; but, as their mouldy books tell them, the giants are

long since passed, and only the bones of them remain. Never having

seen the mountains, there are no mountains.

In the mud of their complacently perpetuated barnyard pond, they

assert that no bright-browed, bright-apparelled shining figures can

be outside of fairy books, old histories, and ancient

superstitions. Never having seen the stars, they deny the stars.

Never having glimpsed the shining ways nor the mortals that tread

them, they deny the existence of the shinning ways as well as the

existence of the high-bright mortals who adventure along the

shining ways. The narrow pupils of their eyes the centre of the

universe, they image the universe in terms of themselves, of their

meagre personalities make pitiful yardsticks with which to measure

the high-bright souls, saying: "Thus long are all souls, and no

longer; it is impossible that there should exist greater-statured

souls than we are, and our gods know that we are great of stature."

But all, or nearly all on the beach, forgave Ida Barton her suit

and form when she took the water. A touch of her hand on her

husband's arm, indication and challenge in her laughing face, and

the two ran as one for half a dozen paces and leapt as one from the

hard-wet sand of the beach, their bodies describing flat arches of

flight ere the water was entered.

There are two surfs at Waikiki: the big, bearded man surf that

roars far out beyond the diving-stage; the smaller, gentler,

wahine, or woman, surf that breaks upon the shore itself. Here is

a great shallowness, where one may wade a hundred or several

hundred feet to get beyond depth. Yet, with a good surf on

outside, the wahine surf can break three or four feet, so that,

close in against the shore, the hard-sand bottom may be three feet

or three inches under the welter of surface foam. To dive from the

beach into this, to fly into the air off racing feet, turn in mid-

flight so that heels are up and head is down, and, so to enter the

water head-first, requires wisdom of waves, timing of waves, and a

trained deftness in entering such unstable depths of water with

pretty, unapprehensive, head-first cleavage, while at the same time

making the shallowest possible of dives.

It is a sweet, and pretty, and daring trick, not learned in a day,

nor learned at all without many a milder bump on the bottom or

close shave of fractured skull or broken neck. Here, on the spot

where the Bartons so beautifully dived, two days before a Stanford

track athlete had broken his neck. His had been an error in timing

the rise and subsidence of a wahine wave.

"A professional," Mrs. Hanley Black sneered to her husband at Ida

Barton's feat.

"Some vaudeville tank girl," was one of the similar remarks with

which the women in the shade complacently reassured one another--

finding, by way of the weird mental processes of self-illusion, a

great satisfaction in the money caste-distinction between one who

worked for what she ate and themselves who did not work for what

they ate.

It was a day of heavy surf on Waikiki. In the wahine surf it was

boisterous enough for good swimmers. But out beyond, in the

kanaka, or man, surf, no one ventured. Not that the score or more

of young surf-riders loafing on the beach could not venture there,

or were afraid to venture there; but because their biggest

outrigger canoes would have been swamped, and their surf-boards

would have been overwhelmed in the too-immense over-topple and

down-fall of the thundering monsters. They themselves, most of

them, could have swum, for man can swim through breakers which

canoes and surf-boards cannot surmount; but to ride the backs of

the waves, rise out of the foam to stand full length in the air

above, and with heels winged with the swiftness of horses to fly

shoreward, was what made sport for them and brought them out from

Honolulu to Waikiki.

The captain of Number Nine canoe, himself a charter member of the

Outrigger and a many-times medallist in long-distance swimming, had

missed seeing the Bartons take the water, and first glimpsed them

beyond the last festoon of bathers clinging to the life-lines.

From then on, from his vantage of the upstairs lanai, he kept his

eyes on them. When they continued out past the steel diving-stage

where a few of the hardiest divers disported, he muttered vexedly

under his breath "damned malahinis!"

Now malahini means new-comer, tender-foot; and, despite the

prettiness of their stroke, he knew that none except malahinis

would venture into the racing channel beyond the diving-stage.

Hence the vexation of the captain of Number Nine. He descended to

the beach, with a low word here and there picked a crew of the

strongest surfers, and returned to the lanai with a pair of

binoculars. Quite casually, the crew, six of them, carried Number

Nine to the water's edge, saw paddles and everything in order for a

quick launching, and lolled about carelessly on the sand. They

were guilty of not advertising that anything untoward was afoot,

although they did steal glances up to their captain straining

through the binoculars.

What made the channel was the fresh-water stream. Coral cannot

abide fresh water. What made the channel race was the immense

shoreward surf-fling of the sea. Unable to remain flung up on the

beach, pounded ever back toward the beach by the perpetual

shoreward rush of the kanaka surf, the up-piled water escaped to

the sea by way of the channel and in the form of under-tow along

the bottom under the breakers. Even in the channel the waves broke

big, but not with the magnificent bigness of terror as to right and

left. So it was that a canoe or a comparatively strong swimmer

could dare the channel. But the swimmer must be a strong swimmer

indeed, who could successfully buck the current in. Wherefore the

captain of Number Nine continued his vigil and his muttered

damnation of malahinis, disgustedly sure that these two malahinis

would compel him to launch Number Nine and go after them when they

found the current too strong to swim in against. As for himself,

caught in their predicament, he would have veered to the left

toward Diamond Head and come in on the shoreward fling of the

kanaka surf. But then, he was no one other than himself, a bronze.

Hercules of twenty-two, the whitest blond man ever burned to

mahogany brown by a sub-tropic sun, with body and lines and muscles

very much resembling the wonderful ones of Duke Kahanamoku. In a

hundred yards the world champion could invariably beat him a second

flat; but over a distance of miles he could swim circles around the

champion.

No one of the many hundreds on the beach, with the exception of

till captain and his crew, knew that the Bartons had passed beyond

the diving-stage. All who had watched them start to swim out had

taken for granted that they had joined the others on the stage.

The captain suddenly sprang upon the railing of the lanai, held on

to a pillar with one hand, and again picked up the two specks of

heads through the glasses. His surprise was verified. The two

fools had veered out of the channel toward Diamond Head, and were

directly seaward of the kanaka surf. Worse, as he looked, they

were starting to come in through the kanaka surf.

He glanced down quickly to the canoe, and even as he glanced, and

as the apparently loafing members quietly arose and took their

places by the canoe for the launching, he achieved judgment.

Before the canoe could get abreast in the channel, all would be

over with the man and woman. And, granted that it could get

abreast of them, the moment it ventured into the kanaka surf it

would be swamped, and a sorry chance would the strongest swimmer of

them have of rescuing a person pounding to pulp on the bottom under

the smashes of the great bearded ones.

The captain saw the first kanaka wave, large of itself, but small

among its fellows, lift seaward behind the two speck-swimmers.

Then he saw them strike a crawl-stroke, side by side, faces

downward, full-lengths out-stretched on surface, their feet

sculling like propellers and their arms flailing in rapid over-hand

strokes, as they spurted speed to approximate the speed of the

overtaking wave, so that, when overtaken, they would become part of

the wave, and travel with it instead of being left behind it.

Thus, if they were coolly skilled enough to ride outstretched on

the surface and the forward face of the crest instead of being

flung and crumpled or driven head-first to bottom, they would dash

shoreward, not propelled by their own energy, but by the energy of

the wave into which they had become incorporated.

And they did it! "SOME swimmers!" the captain of Number Nine made

announcement to himself under his breath. He continued to gaze

eagerly. The best of swimmers could hold such a wave for several

hundred feet. But could they? If they did, they would be a third

of the way through the perils they had challenged. But, not

unexpected by him, the woman failed first, her body not presenting

the larger surfaces that her husband's did. At the end of seventy

feet she was overwhelmed, being driven downward and out of sight by

the tons of water in the over-topple. Her husband followed and

both appeared swimming beyond the wave they had lost.

The captain saw the next wave first. "If they try to body-surf on

that, good night," he muttered; for he knew the swimmer did not

live who would tackle it. Beardless itself, it was father of all

bearded ones, a mile long, rising up far out beyond where the

others rose, towering its solid bulk higher and higher till it

blotted out the horizon, and was a giant among its fellows ere its

beard began to grow as it thinned its crest to the over-curl.

But it was evident that the man and woman knew big water. No

racing stroke did they make in advance of the wave. The captain

inwardly applauded as he saw them turn and face the wave and wait

for it. It was a picture that of all on the beach he alone saw,

wonderfully distinct and vivid in the magnification of the

binoculars. The wall of the wave was truly a wall, mounting, ever

mounting, and thinning, far up, to a transparency of the colours of

the setting sun shooting athwart all the green and blue of it. The

green thinned to lighter green that merged blue even as he looked.

But it was a blue gem-brilliant with innumerable sparkle-points of

rose and gold flashed through it by the sun. On and up, to the

sprouting beard of growing crest, the colour orgy increased until

it was a kaleidoscopic effervescence of transfusing rainbows.

Against the face of the wave showed the heads of the man and woman

like two sheer specks. Specks they were, of the quick, adventuring

among the blind elemental forces, daring the titanic buffets of the

sea. The weight of the down-fall of that father of waves, even

then imminent above their heads, could stun a man or break the

fragile bones of a woman. The captain of Number Nine was

unconscious that he was holding his breath. He was oblivious of

the man. It was the woman. Did she lose her head or courage, or

misplay her muscular part for a moment, she could be hurled a

hundred feet by that giant buffet and left wrenched, helpless, and

breathless to be pulped on the coral bottom and sucked out by the

undertow to be battened on by the fish-sharks too cowardly to take

their human meat alive.

Why didn't they dive deep, and with plenty of time, the captain

wanted to know, instead of waiting till the last tick of safety and

the first tick of peril were one? He saw the woman turn her head

and laugh to the man, and his head turn in response. Above them,

overhanging them, as they mounted the body of the wave, the beard,

creaming white, then frothing into rose and gold, tossed upward

into a spray of jewels. The crisp off-shore trade-wind caught the

beard's fringes and blew them backward and upward yards and yards

into the air. It was then, side by side, and six feet apart, that

they dived straight under the over-curl even then disintegrating to

chaos and falling. Like insects disappearing into the convolutions

of some gorgeous gigantic orchid, so they disappeared, as beard and

crest and spray and jewels, in many tons, crashed and thundered

down just where they had disappeared the moment before, but where

they were no longer.

Beyond the wave they had gone through, they finally showed, side by

side, still six feet apart, swimming shoreward with a steady stroke

until the next wave should make them body-surf it or face and

pierce it. The captain of Number Nine waved his hand to his crew

in dismissal, and sat down on the lanai railing, feeling vaguely

tired and still watching the swimmers through his glasses.

"Whoever and whatever they are," he murmured, "they aren't

malahinis. They simply can't be malahinis."

Not all days, and only on rare days, is the surf heavy at Waikiki;

and, in the days that followed, Ida and Lee Barton, much in

evidence on the beach and in the water, continued to arouse

disparaging interest in the breasts of the tourist ladies, although

the Outrigger captains ceased from worrying about them in the

water. They would watch the pair swim out and disappear in the

blue distance, and they might, or might not, chance to see them

return hours afterward. The point was that the captains did not

bother about their returning, because they knew they would return.

The reason for this was that they were not malahinis. They

belonged. In other words, or, rather, in the potent Islands-word,

they were kamaaina. Kamaaina men and women of forty remembered Lee

Barton from their childhood days, when, in truth, he had been a

malahini, though a very young specimen. Since that time, in the

course of various long stays, he had earned the kamaaina

distinction.

As for Ida Barton, young matrons of her own age (privily wondering

how she managed to keep her figure) met her with arms around and

hearty Hawaiian kisses. Grandmothers must have her to tea and

reminiscence in old gardens of forgotten houses which the tourist

never sees. Less than a week after her arrival, the aged Queen

Liliuokalani must send for her and chide her for neglect. And old

men, on cool and balmy lanais, toothlessly maundered to her about

Grandpa Captain Wilton, of before their time, but whose wild and

lusty deeds and pranks, told them by their fathers, they remembered

with gusto--Grandpa Captain Wilton, or David Wilton, or "All Hands"

as the Hawaiians of that remote day had affectionately renamed him.

All Hands, ex-Northwest trader, the godless, beach-combing,

clipper-shipless and ship-wrecked skipper who had stood on the

beach at Kailua and welcomed the very first of missionaries, off

the brig Thaddeus, in the year 1820, and who, not many years later,

made a scandalous runaway marriage with one of their daughters,

quieted down and served the Kamehamehas long and conservatively as

Minister of the Treasury and Chief of the Customs, and acted as

intercessor and mediator between the missionaries on one side and

the beach-combing crowd, the trading crowd, and the Hawaiian chiefs

on the variously shifting other side.

Nor was Lee Barton neglected. In the midst of the dinners and

lunches, the luaus (Hawaiian feasts) and poi-suppers, and swims and

dances in aloha (love) to both of them, his time and inclination

were claimed by the crowd of lively youngsters of old Kohala days

who had come to know that they possessed digestions and various

other internal functions, and who had settled down to somewhat of

sedateness, who roistered less, and who played bridge much, and

went to baseball often. Also, similarly oriented, was the old

poker crowd of Lee Barton's younger days, which crowd played for

more consistent stakes and limits, while it drank mineral water and

orange juice and timed the final round of "Jacks" never later than

midnight.

Appeared, through all the rout of entertainment, Sonny Grandison,

Hawaii-born, Hawaii-prominent, who, despite his youthful forty-one

years, had declined the proffered governorship of the Territory.

Also, he had ducked Ida Barton in the surf at Waikiki a quarter of

a century before, and, still earlier, vacationing on his father's

great Lakanaii cattle ranch, had hair-raisingly initiated her, and

various other tender tots of five to seven years of age, into his

boys' band, "The Cannibal Head-Hunters" or "The Terrors of

Lakanaii." Still farther, his Grandpa Grandison and her Grandpa

Wilton had been business and political comrades in the old days.

Educated at Harvard, he had become for a time a world-wandering

scientist and social favourite. After serving in the Philippines,

he had accompanied various expeditions through Malaysia, South

America, and Africa in the post of official entomologist. At

forty-one he still retained his travelling commission from the

Smithsonian Institution, while his friends insisted that he knew

more about sugar "bugs" than the expert entomologists employed by

him and his fellow sugar planters in the Experiment Station.

Bulking large at home, he was the best-known representative of

Hawaii abroad. It was the axiom among travelled Hawaii folk, that

wherever over the world they might mention they were from Hawaii,

the invariable first question asked of them was: "And do you know

Sonny Grandison?"

In brief, he was a wealthy man's son who had made good. His

father's million he inherited he had increased to ten millions, at

the same time keeping up his father's benefactions and endowments

and overshadowing them with his own.

But there was still more to him. A ten years' widower, without

issue, he was the most eligible and most pathetically sought-after

marriageable man in all Hawaii. A clean-and-strong-featured

brunette, tall, slenderly graceful, with the lean runner's stomach,

always fit as a fiddle, a distinguished figure in any group, the

greying of hair over his temples (in juxtaposition to his young-

textured skin and bright vital eyes) made him appear even more

distinguished. Despite the social demands upon his time, and

despite his many committee meetings, and meetings of boards of

directors and political conferences, he yet found time and space to

captain the Lakanaii polo team to more than occasional victory, and

on his own island of Lakanaii vied with the Baldwins of Maui in the

breeding and importing of polo ponies.

Given a markedly strong and vital man and woman, when a second

equally markedly strong and vital man enters the scene, the peril

of a markedly strong and vital triangle of tragedy becomes

imminent. Indeed, such a triangle of tragedy may be described, in

the terminology of the flat-floor folk, as "super" and

"impossible." Perhaps, since within himself originated the desire

and the daring, it was Sonny Grandison who first was conscious of

the situation, although he had to be quick to anticipate the

sensing intuition of a woman like Ida Barton. At any rate, and

undebatable, the last of the three to attain awareness was Lee

Barton, who promptly laughed away what was impossible to laugh

away.

His first awareness, he quickly saw, was so belated that half his

hosts and hostesses were already aware. Casting back, he realized

that for some time any affair to which he and his wife were invited

found Sonny Grandison likewise invited. Wherever the two had been,

the three had been. To Kahuku or to Haleiwa, to Ahuimanu, or to

Kaneohe for the coral gardens, or to Koko Head for a picnicking and

a swimming, somehow it invariably happened that Ida rode in Sonny's

car or that both rode in somebody's car. Dances, luaus, dinners,

and outings were all one; the three of them were there.

Having become aware, Lee Barton could not fail to register Ida's

note of happiness ever rising when in the same company with Sonny

Grandison, and her willingness to ride in the same cars with him,

to dance with him, or to sit out dances with him. Most convincing

of all, was Sonny Grandison himself. Forty-one, strong,

experienced, his face could no more conceal what he felt than could

be concealed a lad of twenty's ordinary lad's love. Despite the

control and restraint of forty years, he could no more mask his

soul with his face than could Lee Barton, of equal years, fail to

read that soul through so transparent a face. And often, to other

women, talking, when the topic of Sonny came up, Lee Barton heard

Ida express her fondness for Sonny, or her almost too-eloquent

appreciation of his polo-playing, his work in the world, and his

general all-rightness of achievement.

About Sonny's state of mind and heart Lee had no doubt. It was

patent enough for the world to read. But how about Ida, his own

dozen-years' wife of a glorious love-match? He knew that woman,

ever the mysterious sex, was capable any time of unguessed mystery.

Did her frank comradeliness with Grandison token merely frank

comradeliness and childhood contacts continued and recrudesced into

adult years? or did it hide, in woman's subtler and more secretive

ways, a beat of heart and return of feeling that might even out-

balance what Sonny's face advertised?

Lee Barton was not happy. A dozen years of utmost and post-nuptial

possession of his wife had proved to him, so far as he was

concerned, that she was his one woman in the world, and that the

woman was unborn, much less unglimpsed, who could for a moment

compete with her in his heart, his soul, and his brain. Impossible

of existence was the woman who could lure him away from her, much

less over-bid her in the myriad, continual satisfactions she

rendered him.

Was this, then, he asked himself, the dreaded contingency of all

fond Benedicts, to be her first "affair?" He tormented himself

with the ever iterant query, and, to the astonishment of the

reformed Kohala poker crowd of wise and middle-aged youngsters as

well as to the reward of the keen scrutiny of the dinner-giving and

dinner-attending women, he began to drink King William instead of

orange juice, to bully up the poker limit, to drive of nights his

own car more than rather recklessly over the Pali and Diamond Head

roads, and, ere dinner or lunch or after, to take more than an

average man's due of old-fashioned cocktails and Scotch highs.

All the years of their marriage she had been ever complaisant

toward him in his card-playing. This complaisance, to him, had

become habitual. But now that doubt had arisen, it seemed to him

that he noted an eagerness in her countenancing of his poker

parties. Another point he could not avoid noting was that Sonny

Grandison was missed by the poker and bridge crowds. He seemed to

be too busy. Now where was Sonny, while he, Lee Barton, was

playing? Surely not always at committee and boards of directors

meetings. Lee Barton made sure of this. He easily learned that at

such times Sonny was more than usually wherever Ida chanced to be--

at dances, or dinners, or moonlight swimming parties, or, the very

afternoon he had flatly pleaded rush of affairs as an excuse not to

join Lee and Langhorne Jones and Jack Holstein in a bridge battle

at the Pacific Club--that afternoon he had played bridge at Dora

Niles' home with three women, one of whom was Ida.

Returning, once, from an afternoon's inspection of the great dry-

dock building at Pearl Harbour, Lee Barton, driving his machine

against time, in order to have time to dress for dinner, passed

Sonny's car; and Sonny's one passenger, whom he was taking home,

was Ida. One night, a week later, during which interval he had

played no cards, he came home at eleven from a stag dinner at the

University Club, just preceding Ida's return from the Alstone poi

supper and dance. And Sonny had driven her home. Major Fanklin

and his wife had first been dropped off by them, they mentioned, at

Fort Shafter, on the other side of town and miles away from the

beach.

Lee Barton, after all mere human man, as a human man unfailingly

meeting Sonny in all friendliness, suffered poignantly in secret.

Not even Ida dreamed that he suffered; and she went her merry,

careless, laughing way, secure in her own heart, although a trifle

perplexed at her husband's increase in number of pre-dinner

cocktails.

Apparently, as always, she had access to almost all of him; but now

she did not have access to his unguessable torment, nor to the long

parallel columns of mental book-keeping running their totalling

balances from moment to moment, day and night, in his brain. In

one column were her undoubtable spontaneous expressions of her

usual love and care for him, her many acts of comfort-serving and

of advice-asking and advice-obeying. In another column, in which

the items increasingly were entered, were her expressions and acts

which he could not but classify as dubious. Were they what they

seemed? Or were they of duplicity compounded, whether deliberately

or unconsciously? The third column, longest of all, totalling most

in human heart-appraisements, was filled with items relating

directly or indirectly to her and Sonny Grandison. Lee Barton did

not deliberately do this book-keeping. He could not help it. He

would have liked to avoid it. But in his fairly ordered mind the

items of entry, of themselves and quite beyond will on his part,

took their places automatically in their respective columns.

In his distortion of vision, magnifying apparently trivial detail

which half the time he felt he magnified, he had recourse to

MacIlwaine, to whom he had once rendered a very considerable

service. MacIlwaine was chief of detectives. "Is Sonny Grandison

a womaning man?" Barton had demanded. MacIlwaine had said nothing.

"Then he is a womaning man," had been Barton's declaration. And

still the chief of detectives had said nothing.

Briefly afterward, ere he destroyed it as so much dynamite, Lee

Barton went over the written report. Not bad, not really bad, was

the summarization; but not too good after the death of his wife ten

years before. That had been a love-match almost notorious in

Honolulu society, because of the completeness of infatuation, not

only before, but after marriage, and up to her tragic death when

her horse fell with her a thousand feet off Nahiku Trail. And not

for a long time afterward, MacIlwaine stated, had Grandison been

guilty of interest in any woman. And whatever it was, it had been

unvaryingly decent. Never a hint of gossip or scandal; and the

entire community had come to accept that he was a one-woman man,

and would never marry again. What small affairs MacIlwaine had

jotted down he insisted that Sonny Grandison did not dream were

known by another person outside the principals themselves.

Barton glanced hurriedly, almost shamedly, at the several names and

incidents, and knew surprise ere he committed the document to the

flames. At any rate, Sonny had been most discreet. As he stared

at the ashes, Barton pondered how much of his own younger life,

from his bachelor days, resided in old MacIlwaine's keeping. Next,

Barton found himself blushing, to himself, at himself. If

MacIlwaine knew so much of the private lives of community figures,

then had not he, her husband and protector and shielder, planted in

MacIlwaine's brain a suspicion of Ida?

"Anything on your mind?" Lee asked his wife that evening, as he

stood holding her wrap while she put the last touches to her

dressing.

This was in line with their old and successful compact of

frankness, and he wondered, while he waited her answer, why he had

refrained so long from asking her.

"No," she smiled. "Nothing particular. Afterwards . . . perhaps .

. . "

She became absorbed in gazing at herself in the mirror, while she

dabbed some powder on her nose and dabbed it off again.

"You know my way, Lee," she added, after the pause. "It takes me

time to gather things together in my own way--when there are things

to gather; but when I do, you always get them. And often there's

nothing in them after all, I find, and so you are saved the

nuisance of them."

She held out her arms for him to place the wrap about her--her

valiant little arms that were so wise and steel-like in battling

with the breakers, and that yet were such just mere-woman's arms,

round and warm and white, delicious as a woman's arms should be,

with the canny muscles, masking under soft-roundness of contour and

fine smooth skin, capable of being flexed at will by the will of

her.

He pondered her, with a grievous hurt and yearning of appreciation-

-so delicate she seemed, so porcelain-fragile that a strong man

could snap her in the crook of his arm.

"We must hurry!" she cried, as he lingered in the adjustment of the

flimsy wrap over her flimsy-prettiness of gown. "We'll be late.

And if it showers up Nuuanu, putting the curtains up will make us

miss the second dance."

He made a note to observe with whom she danced that second dance,

as she preceded him across the room to the door; while at the same

time he pleasured his eye in what he had so often named to himself

as the spirit-proud flesh-proud walk of her.

"You don't feel I'm neglecting you in my too-much poker?" he tried

again, by indirection.

"Mercy, no! You know I just love you to have your card orgies.

They're tonic for you. And you're so much nicer about them, so

much more middle-aged. Why, it's almost years since you sat up

later than one."

It did not shower up Nuuanu, and every overhead star was out in a

clear trade-wind sky. In time at the Inchkeeps' for the second

dance, Lee Barton observed that his wife danced it with Grandison--

which, of itself, was nothing unusual, but which became immediately

a registered item in Barton's mental books.

An hour later, depressed and restless, declining to make one of a

bridge foursome in the library and escaping from a few young

matrons, he strolled out into the generous grounds. Across the

lawn, at the far edge, he came upon the hedge of night-blooming

cereus. To each flower, opening after dark and fading, wilting,

perishing with the dawn, this was its one night of life. The

great, cream-white blooms, a foot in diameter and more, lily-like

and wax-like, white beacons of attraction in the dark, penetrating

and seducing the night with their perfume, were busy and beautiful

with their brief glory of living.

But the way along the hedge was populous with humans, two by two,

male and female, stealing out between the dances or strolling the

dances out, while they talked in low soft voices and gazed upon the

wonder of flower-love. From the lanai drifted the love-caressing

strains of "Hanalei" sung by the singing boys. Vaguely Lee Barton

remembered--perhaps it was from some Maupassant story--the abbe,

obsessed by the theory that behind all things were the purposes of

God and perplexed so to interpret the night, who discovered at the

last that the night was ordained for love.

The unanimity of the night as betrayed by flowers and humans was a

hurt to Barton. He circled back toward the house along a winding

path that skirted within the edge of shadow of the monkey-pods and

algaroba trees. In the obscurity, where his path curved away into

the open again, he looked across a space of a few feet where, on

another path in the shadow, stood a pair in each other's arms. The

impassioned low tones of the man had caught his ear and drawn his

eyes, and at the moment of his glance, aware of his presence, the

voice ceased, and the two remained immobile, furtive, in each

other's arms.

He continued his walk, sombred by the thought that in the gloom of

the trees was the next progression from the openness of the sky

over those who strolled the night-flower hedge. Oh, he knew the

game when of old no shadow was too deep, no ruse of concealment too

furtive, to veil a love moment. After all, humans were like

flowers, he meditated. Under the radiance from the lighted lanai,

ere entering the irritating movement of life again to which he

belonged, he paused to stare, scarcely seeing, at a flaunt of

display of scarlet double-hibiscus blooms. And abruptly all that

he was suffering, all that he had just observed, from the night-

blooming hedge and the two-by-two love-murmuring humans to the pair

like thieves in each other's arms, crystallized into a parable of

life enunciated by the day-blooming hibiscus upon which he gazed,

now at the end of its day. Bursting into its bloom after the dawn,

snow-white, warming to pink under the hours of sun, and quickening

to scarlet with the dark from which its beauty and its being would

never emerge, it seemed to him that it epitomized man's life and

passion.

What further connotations he might have drawn he was never to know;

for from behind, in the direction of the algarobas and monkey-pods,

came Ida's unmistakable serene and merry laugh. He did not look,

being too afraid of what he knew he would see, but retreated

hastily, almost stumbling, up the steps to the lanai. Despite that

he knew what he was to see, when he did turn his head and beheld

his wife and Sonny, the pair he had seen thieving in the dark, he

went suddenly dizzy, and paused, supporting himself with a hand

against a pillar, and smiling vacuously at the grouped singing boys

who were pulsing the sensuous night into richer sensuousness with

their honi kaua wiki-wiki refrain.

The next moment he had wet his lips with his tongue, controlled his

face and flesh, and was bantering with Mrs. Inchkeep. But he could

not waste time, or he would have to encounter the pair he could

hear coming up the steps behind him.

"I feel as if I had just crossed the Great Thirst," he told his

hostess, "and that nothing less than a high-ball will preserve me."

She smiled permission and nodded toward the smoking lanai, where

they found him talking sugar politics with the oldsters when the

dance began to break up.

Quite a party of half a dozen machines were starting for Waikiki,

and he found himself billeted to drive the Leslies and Burnstons

home, though he did not fail to note that Ida sat in the driver's

seat with Sonny in Sonny's car. Thus, she was home ahead of him

and brushing her hair when he arrived. The parting of bed-going

was usual, on the face of it, although he was almost rigid in his

successful effort for casualness as he remembered whose lips had

pressed hers last before his.

Was, then, woman the utterly unmoral creature as depicted by the

German pessimists? he asked himself, as he tossed under his reading

lamp, unable to sleep or read. At the end of an hour he was out of

bed, and into his medicine case. Five grains of opium he took

straight. An hour later, afraid of his thoughts and the prospect

of a sleepless night, he took another grain. At one-hour intervals

he twice repeated the grain dosage. But so slow was the action of

the drug that dawn had broken ere his eyes closed.

At seven he was awake again, dry-mouthed, feeling stupid and

drowsy, yet incapable of dozing off for more than several minutes

at a time. He abandoned the idea of sleep, ate breakfast in bed,

and devoted himself to the morning papers and the magazines. But

the drug effect held, and he continued briefly to doze through his

eating and reading. It was the same when he showered and dressed,

and, though the drug had brought him little forgetfulness during

the night, he felt grateful for the dreaming lethargy with which it

possessed him through the morning.

It was when his wife arose, her serene and usual self, and came in

to him, smiling and roguish, delectable in her kimono, that the

whim-madness of the opium in his system seized upon him. When she

had clearly and simply shown that she had nothing to tell him under

their ancient compact of frankness, he began building his opium

lie. Asked how he had slept, he replied:

"Miserably. Twice I was routed wide awake with cramps in my feet.

I was almost too afraid to sleep again. But they didn't come back,

though my feet are sorer than blazes."

"Last year you had them," she reminded him.

"Maybe it's going to become a seasonal affliction," he smiled.

"They're not serious, but they're horrible to wake up to. They

won't come again till to-night, if they come at all, but in the

meantime I feel as if I had been bastinadoed."

In the afternoon of the same day, Lee and Ida Barton made their

shallow dive from the Outrigger beach, and went on, at a steady

stroke, past the diving-stage to the big water beyond the Kanaka

Surf. So quiet was the sea that when, after a couple of hours,

they turned and lazily started shoreward through the Kanaka Surf

they had it all to themselves. The breakers were not large enough

to be exciting, and the last languid surf-boarders and canoeists

had gone in to shore. Suddenly, Lee turned over on his back.

"What is it?" Ida called from twenty feet away.

"My foot--cramp," he answered calmly, though the words were twisted

out through clenched jaws of control.

The opium still had its dreamy way with him, and he was without

excitement. He watched her swimming toward him with so steady and

unperturbed a stroke that he admired her own self-control, although

at the same time doubt stabbed him with the thought that it was

because she cared so little for him, or, rather, so much

immediately more for Grandison.

"Which foot?" she asked, as she dropped her legs down and began

treading water beside him.

"The left one--ouch! Now it's both of them."

He doubled his knees, as if involuntarily raised his head and chest

forward out of the water, and sank out of sight in the down-wash of

a scarcely cresting breaker. Under no more than a brief several

seconds, he emerged spluttering and stretched out on his back

again.

Almost he grinned, although he managed to turn the grin into a

pain-grimace, for his simulated cramp had become real. At least in

one foot it had, and the muscles convulsed painfully.

"The right is the worst," he muttered, as she evinced her intention

of laying hands on his cramp and rubbing it out. "But you'd better

keep away. I've had cramps before, and I know I'm liable to grab

you if these get any worse."

Instead, she laid her hands on the hard-knotted muscles, and began

to rub and press and bend.

"Please," he gritted through his teeth. "You must keep away. Just

let me lie out here--I'll bend the ankle and toe-joints in the

opposite ways and make it pass. I've done it before and know how

to work it."

She released him, remaining close beside him and easily treading

water, her eyes upon his face to judge the progress of his own

attempt at remedy. But Lee Barton deliberately bent joints and

tensed muscles in the directions that would increase the cramp. In

his bout the preceding year with the affliction, he had learned,

lying in bed and reading when seized, to relax and bend the cramps

away without even disturbing his reading. But now he did the thing

in reverse, intensifying the cramp, and, to his startled delight,

causing it to leap into his right calf. He cried out with anguish,

apparently lost control of himself, attempted to sit up, and was

washed under by the next wave.

He came up, spluttered, spread-eagled on the surface, and had his

knotted calf gripped by the strong fingers of both Ida's small

hands.

"It's all right," she said, while she worked. "No cramp like this

lasts very long."

"I didn't know it could be so savage," he groaned. "If only it

doesn't go higher! It makes one feel so helpless."

He gripped the biceps of both her arms in a sudden spasm,

attempting to climb out upon her as a drowning man might try to

climb out on an oar and sinking her down under him. In the

struggle under water, before he permitted her to wrench clear, her

rubber cap was torn off, and her hairpins pulled out, so that she

came up gasping for air and half-blinded by her wet-clinging hair.

Also, he was certain he had surprised her into taking in a quantity

of water.

"Keep away!" he warned, as he spread-eagled with acted

desperateness.

But her fingers were deep into the honest pain-wrack of his calf,

and in her he could observe no reluctance of fear.

"It's creeping up," he grunted through tight teeth, the grunt

itself a half-controlled groan.

He stiffened his whole right leg, as with another spasm, hurting

his real minor cramps, but flexing the muscles of his upper leg

into the seeming hardness of cramp.

The opium still worked in his brain, so that he could play-act

cruelly, while at the same time he appraised and appreciated her

stress of control and will that showed in her drawn face, and the

terror of death in her eyes, with beyond it and behind it, in her

eyes and through her eyes, the something more of the spirit of

courage, and higher thought, and resolution.

Still further, she did not enunciate so cheap a surrender as, "I'll

die with you." Instead, provoking his admiration, she did say,

quietly: "Relax. Sink until only your lips are out. I'll support

your head. There must be a limit to cramp. No man ever died of

cramp on land. Then in the water no strong swimmer should die of

cramp. It's bound to reach its worst and pass. We're both strong

swimmers and cool-headed--"

He distorted his face and deliberately dragged her under. But when

they emerged, still beside him, supporting his head as she

continued to tread water, she was saying:

"Relax. Take it easy. I'll hold your head up. Endure it. Live

through it. Don't fight it. Make yourself slack--slack in your

mind; and your body will slack. Yield. Remember how you taught me

to yield to the undertow."

An unusually large breaker for so mild a surf curled overhead, and

he climbed out on her again, sinking both of them under as the

wave-crest over-fell and smashed down.

"Forgive me," he mumbled through pain clenched teeth, as they drew

in their first air again. "And leave me." He spoke jerkily, with

pain-filled pauses between his sentences. "There is no need for

both of us to drown. I've got to go. It will be in my stomach, at

any moment, and then I'll drag you under, and be unable to let go

of you. Please, please, dear, keep away. One of us is enough.

You've plenty to live for."

She looked at him in reproach so deep that the last vestige of the

terror of death was gone from her eyes. It was as if she had said,

and more than if she had said: "I have only you to live for."

Then Sonny did not count with her as much as he did!--was Barton's

exultant conclusion. But he remembered her in Sonny's arms under

the monkey-pods and determined on further cruelty. Besides, it was

the lingering opium in him that suggested this cruelty. Since he

had undertaken this acid test, urged the poppy juice, then let it

be a real acid test.

He doubled up and went down, emerged, and apparently strove

frantically to stretch out in the floating position. And she did

not keep away from him.

"It's too much!" he groaned, almost screamed. "I'm losing my grip.

I've got to go. You can't save me. Keep away and save yourself."

But she was to him, striving to float his mouth clear of the salt,

saying: "It's all right. It's all right. The worst is right now.

Just endure it a minute more, and it will begin to ease."

He screamed out, doubled, seized her, and took her down with him.

And he nearly did drown her, so well did he play-act his own

drowning. But never did she lose her head nor succumb to the fear

of death so dreadfully imminent. Always, when she got her head

out, she strove to support him while she panted and gasped

encouragement in terms of: "Relax . . . Relax . . . Slack . . .

Slack out . . . At any time . . . now . . . you'll pass . . . the

worst . . . No matter how much it hurts . . . it will pass . . .

You're easier now . . . aren't you?"

And then he would put her down again, going from bad to worse--in

his ill-treatment of her; making her swallow pints of salt water,

secure in the knowledge that it would not definitely hurt her.

Sometimes they came up for brief emergences, for gasping seconds in

the sunshine on the surface, and then were under again, dragged

under by him, rolled and tumbled under by the curling breakers.

Although she struggled and tore herself from his grips, in the

times he permitted her freedom she did not attempt to swim away

from him, but, with fading strength and reeling consciousness,

invariably came to him to try to save him. When it was enough, in

his judgment, and more than enough, he grew quieter, left her

released, and stretched out on the surface.

"A-a-h," he sighed long, almost luxuriously, and spoke with pauses

for breath. "It is passing. It seems like heaven. My dear, I'm

water-logged, yet the mere absence of that frightful agony makes my

present state sheerest bliss."

She tried to gasp a reply, but could not.

"I'm all right," he assured her. "Let us float and rest up.

Stretch out, yourself, and get your wind back."

And for half an hour, side by side, on their backs, they floated in

the fairly placid Kanaka Surf. Ida Barton was the first to

announce recovery by speaking first.

"And how do you feel now, man of mine?" she asked.

"I feel as if I'd been run over by a steam-roller," he replied.

"And you, poor darling?"

"I feel I'm the happiest woman in the world. I'm so happy I could

almost cry, but I'm too happy even for that. You had me horribly

frightened for a time. I thought I was to lose you."

Lee Barton's heart pounded up. Never a mention of losing herself.

This, then, was love, and all real love, proved true--the great

love that forgot self in the loved one.

"And I'm the proudest man in the world," he told her; "because my

wife is the bravest woman in the world."

"Brave!" she repudiated. "I love you. I never knew how much, how

really much, I loved you as when I was losing you. And now let's

work for shore. I want you all alone with me, your arms around me,

while I tell you all you are to me and shall always be to me."

In another half-hour, swimming strong and steadily, they landed on

the beach and walked up the hard wet sand among the sand-loafers

and sun-baskers.

"What were the two of you doing out there?" queried one of the

Outrigger captains. "Cutting up?"

"Cutting up," Ida Barton answered with a smile.

"We're the village cut-ups, you know," was Lee Barton's assurance.

That evening, the evening's engagement cancelled, found the two, in

a big chair, in each other's arms.

"Sonny sails to-morrow noon," she announced casually and irrelevant

to anything in the conversation. "He's going out to the Malay

Coast to inspect what's been done with that lumber and rubber

company of his."

"First I've heard of his leaving us," Lee managed to say, despite

his surprise.

"I was the first to hear of it," she added. "He told me only last

night."

"At the dance?"

She nodded.

"Rather sudden, wasn't it?"

"Very sudden." Ida withdrew herself from her husband's arms and

sat up. "And I want to talk to you about Sonny. I've never had a

real secret from you before. I didn't intend ever to tell you.

But it came to me to-day, out in the Kanaka Surf, that if we passed

out, it would be something left behind us unsaid."

She paused, and Lee, half-anticipating what was coming, did nothing

to help her, save to girdle and press her hand in his.

"Sonny rather lost his . . . his head over me," she faltered. "Of

course, you must have noticed it. And . . . and last night, he

wanted me to run away with him. Which isn't my confession at all .

. . "

Still Lee Barton waited.

"My confession," she resumed, "is that I wasn't the least bit angry

with him--only sorrowful and regretful. My confession is that I

rather slightly, only rather more than slightly, lost my own head.

That was why I was kind and gentle to him last night. I am no

fool. I knew it was due. And--oh, I know, I'm just a feeble

female of vanity compounded--I was proud to have such a man swept

off his feet by me, by little me. I encouraged him. I have no

excuse. Last night would not have happened had I not encouraged

him. And I, and not he, was the sinner last night when he asked

me. And I told him no, impossible, as you should know why without

my repeating it to you. And I was maternal to him, very much

maternal. I let him take me in his arms, let myself rest against

him, and, for the first time because it was to be the for-ever last

time, let him kiss me and let myself kiss him. You . . . I know

you understand . . . it was his renunciation. And I didn't love

Sonny. I don't love him. I have loved you, and you only, all the

time."

She waited, and felt her husband's arm pass around her shoulder and

under her own arm, and yielded to his drawing down of her to him.

"You did have me worried more than a bit," he admitted, "until I

was afraid I was going to lose you. And . . . " He broke off in

patent embarrassment, then gripped the idea courageously. "Oh,

well, you know you're my one woman. Enough said."

She fumbled the match-box from his pocket and struck a match to

enable him to light his long-extinct cigar.

"Well," he said, as the smoke curled about them, "knowing you as I

know you, and ALL of you, all I can say is that I'm sorry for Sonny

for what he's missed--awfully sorry for him, but equally glad for

me. And . . . one other thing: five years hence I've something to

tell you, something rich, something ridiculously rich, and all

about me and the foolishness of me over you. Five years. Is it a

date?"

"I shall keep it if it is fifty years," she sighed, as she nestled

closer to him.

GLEN ELLEN, CALIFORNIA.

August 17, 1916.

Footnotes:

{1} See Dibble's "A History of the Sandwich Islands."

End of Project Gutenberg Etext On the Makaloa Mat/Island Tales by London