



Portrait of a woman, by Aman-Edmond Jean

Wood-engraving by Timothy Cole

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Me

A Book of Remembrance

THE writing of this book seems to me one of the most astounding literary feats I have ever known. It is one hundred thousand words long; it was started on Thanksgiving day and finished before New Year's. The actual writing occupied two weeks, the revision another two. The reason for this amazing celerity lies in the fact that it is pure reporting; the author has not branched out into any byways of style, but has merely told in the simplest language possible what she actually remembered. These are the circumstances in which the book was undertaken.

The author had been wrenched from her feverishly busy life to undergo an operation in a hospital; four days later she began the writing of this book. I will quote her own words: "It seems to me as though these two weeks I have just passed in the hospital have been the first time in thirteen years in which I have had a chance to think. As I lay on my back and looked at the ceiling, the events of my girlhood came before me, rushed back with such overwhelming vividness that I picked up a pencil and began to write."

I cannot imagine just what the general reader's attitude toward this work will be. I myself, reading it in the light of the knowledge I possess of the life of the author, look upon it not only as an intensely interesting human document, but as a suggestive sociological study. It is an illuminative picture of what may befall a working-girl who, at the age of seventeen, gaily ventures forth to conquer life with ten dollars in her pocket. You may object that many of her difficulties were brought about through her own initiative; that she ran to meet them open-armed. This is, no doubt, true, but you must consider her ignorance and her temperament. It was her naïveté and generosity and kindly impulses that left her unarmed. She was unique in many respects—in her peculiar heredity, her extreme ability, her uncanny charm, and her total unacquaintedness with the world.

I have known the author for a number of years, and I know that what she says is true, though the names of people and places have necessarily been changed in order to hide their identity. The author has written a number of books that have had a wide circulation. The aspirations of the little girl of seventeen with the suitcase full of poetry have been realized!

JEAN WEBSTER.

IT was a cold, blizzardy day in the month of March when I left Quebec, and my weeping, shivering relatives made an anxious, melancholy group about my departing train. I myself cried a bit, with my face pressed against the window; but I was seventeen, my heart was light, and I had not been happy at home.

My father was an artist, and we were very poor. My mother had been a tight-rope dancer in her early youth. She was an excitable, temperamental creature from whose life all romance had been squeezed by the torturing experience of bearing sixteen children. Moreover, she was a native of a far-distant land, and I do not

think she ever got over the feeling of being a stranger in Canada.

Time was when my father, a young and ardent adventurer (an English-Irishman) had wandered far and wide over the face of the earth. The son of rich parents, he had sojourned in China and Japan and India in the days when few white men ventured into the Orient. But that was long ago.

This story is frankly of myself, and I mention these few facts merely in the possibility of their proving of some psychological interest later; also they may explain why it was possible for a parent to allow a young girl of seventeen to leave her home with exactly ten dollars in her purse (I do not think my father knew just how much money I did have) to start upon a voyage to the West Indies!

In any event, the fact remains that I had overruled my father's weak and absent-minded objections and my mother's exclamatory ones, and I had accepted a position in Jamaica, West Indies, to work for a little local newspaper called "The Lantern."

It all came about through my having written at the age of sixteen a crude, but exciting, story which a kindly friend, the editor of a Quebec weekly paper, actually accepted and published.

I had always secretly believed there were the strains of genius somewhere hidden in me; I had always lived in a little dream world of my own, wherein, beautiful and courted, I moved among the elect of the earth. Now I had given vivid proof of some unusual power! I walked on air. The world was rose-colored; nay, it was golden.

With my story in my hand, I went to the office of a family friend. I had expected to be smiled upon and approved, but also lectured and advised. My friend, however, regarded me speculatively.

"I wonder," said he, "whether *you* could n't take the place of a girl out in Jamaica who is anxious to return to Canada, but is under contract to remain there for three years."

The West Indies! I *had* heard of the

land somewhere, probably in my school geography. I think it was associated in my mind in some way with the fairy-stories I read. Nevertheless, with the alacrity and assurance of youth I cried out that *of course* I would go.

"It's a long way off," said my friend, dubiously, "and you are very young."

I assured him earnestly that I should grow, and as for the distance, I airily dismissed that objection as something too trivial to consider. Was I not the daughter of a man who had been back and forth to China no fewer than eighteen times, and that during the perilous period of the Tai-ping Rebellion? Had not my father made journeys from the Orient in the old-fashioned sailing-vessels, being at sea a hundred-odd days at a time? What could not his daughter do?

Whatever impression I made upon this agent of the West Indian newspaper must have been fairly good, for he said he would write immediately to Mr. Campbell, the owner of "The Lantern," who, by the way, was also a Canadian, and recommend me.

I am not much of a hand at keeping secrets, but I did not tell my parents. I had been studying shorthand for some time, and now I plunged into that harder than ever, for the position was one in which I could utilize stenography.

It was less than two weeks later when our friend came to the house to report that the West Indian editor had cabled for me to be sent at once.

I was the fifth girl in our family to leave home. I suppose my father and mother had become sadly accustomed to the departing of the older children to try their fortunes in more promising cities than Quebec; but I was the first to leave home for a land as distant as the West Indies, though two of my sisters had gone to the United States. Still, there remained a hungry, crushing brood of little ones younger than I. With what fierce joy did I not now look forward to getting away at last from that same noisy, tormenting brood, for whom it had been my particular and detested task to care! So my father

and mother put no obstacle in the way of my going. I remember passionately threatening to "run away" if they did.

My clothes were thick and woolen. I wore a red knitted toque, with a tassel that wagged against my cheek. My coat was rough and hopelessly Canadian. My dress a shapeless bag belted in at the waist. I was not beautiful to look at, but I had a bright, eager face, black and shining eyes, and black and shining hair. My cheeks were as red as a Canadian apple. I was a little thing, and, like my mother, foreign-looking. I think I had the most acute, inquiring, and eager mind of any girl of my age in the world.

A man on the train who had promised my father to see me as far as my boat did so. When we arrived in New York he took me there in a carriage—the first carriage in which I had ever ridden in my life!

I had a letter to the captain, in whose special charge I was to be, that my Jamaica employer had written. So I climbed on board the *Atlas*. It was about six in the morning, and there were not many people about—just a few sailors washing the decks. I saw, however, a round-faced man in a white cap, who smiled at me broadly. I decided that he was the captain. So I went up to him and presented my letter, addressing him as "Captain Hollowell." He held his sides and laughed at me, and another man—this one was young and blond and very good-looking; at least so he seemed to the eyes of seventeen—came over to inquire the cause of the merriment. Greatly to my mortification, I learned from the new arrival that the man I had spoken to was not the captain, but the cook. He himself was Mr. Marsden, the purser, and he was prepared to take care of me until Captain Hollowell arrived.

The boat would not sail for two hours, so I told Mr. Marsden that I guessed I'd take a walk in New York. He advised me strenuously not to, saying that I might "get lost." I scorned his suggestion. What, I get lost? I laughed at the idea. So I went for my "walk in New York."

I kept to one street, the one at the end of which my boat lay. It was an ugly, dirty, noisy street,—noisy even at that early hour,—for horrible-looking trucks rattled over the cobblestoned road, and there were scores of people hurrying in every direction. Of the streets of New York I had heard strange, wonderful, and beautiful tales; but as I trotted along, I confess I was deeply disappointed and astonished. I think I was on Canal Street, or another of the streets of lower New York.

I was not going to leave the United States, however, without dropping a bit of my ten dollars behind me. So I found a store, in which I bought some post-cards, a lace collar, and some ribbon—pink. When I returned to the boat I possessed, instead of ten dollars, just seven. However, this seemed a considerable sum to me, and I assured myself that on the boat itself, of course, one could not spend money.

I was standing by the rail watching the crowds on the wharf below. Every one on board was saying good-by to some one else, and people were waving and calling to one another. Everybody seemed happy and excited and gay. I felt suddenly very little and forlorn. I alone had no one to bid me good-by, to wave to me, and to bring me flowers. I deeply pitied myself, and I suppose my eyes were full of tears when I turned away from the rail as the boat pulled out.

The blond young purser was watching me, and now he came up cheerfully and began to talk, pointing out things to me in the harbor as the boat moved along. He had such nice blue eyes and shining white teeth, and his smile was quite the most winning that I had ever seen. Moreover, he wore a most attractive uniform. I forgot my temporary woes. He brought me his "own special" deck chair,—at least he said it was his,—and soon I was comfortably ensconced in it, my feet wrapped about with a warm rug produced from somewhere—also his. I felt a sense of being under his personal charge. A good part of the morning he managed to remain

near me, and when he did go off among the other passengers, he took the trouble to explain to me that it was to attend to his duties.

I decided that he must have fallen in love with me. The thought delightfully warmed me. True, nobody had ever been in love with me before. I was the Ugly Duckling of an otherwise astonishingly good-looking family. Still, I was sure I recognized the true signs of love (had I not in dreams and fancies already been the heroine in a hundred princely romances?), and I forthwith began to wonder what life as the wife of a sailor might be like.

At dinner-time, however, he delivered me, with one of his charming smiles, to a portly and important personage who proved to be the real captain. My place at table was to be at his right side. He was a red-faced, jovial, mighty-voiced Scotchman. He called me a "puir little lassie" as soon as he looked at me. He explained that my West Indian employer (also a Scotch-Canadian) was his particular friend, and that he had promised to take personal care of me upon the voyage. He hoped Marsden, in his place, had looked after me properly, as he had been especially assigned by him to do. I, with a stifling lump of hurt vanity and pride in my throat, admitted that he had.

Then he was *not* in love with me, after all!

I felt cruelly unhappy as I stole out on deck after dinner. I disdained to look for that special deck chair my sailor had said I could have all for my own, and instead I sat down in the first one at hand.

Ugh! how miserable I felt! I supposed, said I to myself, that it was I who had been the one to fall in love, fool that I was! But I had no idea one felt so wretched even when in love. Besides, with all my warm Canadian clothes, I felt chilly and shivery.

A hateful, sharp-nosed little man came poking around me. He looked at me with his eyes snapping, and coughed and rumbled in his throat as if getting ready to say something disagreeable to me. I turned my back toward him, pulled the rug about

my feet, closed my eyes, and pretended to go to sleep. Then he said:

"Say, excuse me, but you 've got my chair and rug."

I sat up. I was about to retort that "first come, first served" should be the rule, when out on deck came my friend Marsden. In a twinkling he appeared to take in the situation, for he strode quickly over to me, and, much to my indignation, took me by the arm and helped me to rise, saying that my chair was "over here."

I was about to reply in as haughty and rebuking a tone as I could command when I was suddenly seized with a most frightful surge of nausea. With my good-looking blond sailor still holding me by the arm, and murmuring something that sounded both laughing and soothing, I fled over to the side of the boat.



II

FOR four days I never left my state-room. "A sea-voyage is an inch of hell," says an old proverb of my mother's land, and to this proverb I most heartily assented.

An American girl occupied the "bunk" over mine, and shared with me the diminutive state-room. She was even sicker than I, and being sisters in great misery, a sweet sympathy grew up between us, so that under her direction I chewed and sucked on the sourest of lemons, and under mine she swallowed lumps of ice, a suggestion made by my father.

On the second day I had recovered somewhat, and so was able to wait upon and assist her a bit. Also, I found in her a patient and silent listener (Heaven knows she could not be otherwise, penned up as she was in that narrow bunk), and I told her all about the glorious plans and schemes I had made for my famous future; also I brought forth from my bag numerous poems and stories, and these I poured into her deaf ears in a voluble stream as she lay shaking and moaning in her bunk.

It had been growing steadily warmer—so warm, indeed, that I felt about the room to ascertain whether there were some heating-pipes running through it.

On the fourth day my new friend sat up in her bunk and passionately went "on strike." She said:

"Say, I wish you 'd quit reading me all that stuff. I know it 's lovely, but I 've got a headache, and honestly I can't for the life of me take an interest in your poems and stories."

Deeply hurt, I folded my manuscripts. She leaned out of her berth and caught at my arm.

"Don't be angry," she said. "I did n't mean to hurt you."

I retorted with dignity that I was not in the slightest degree hurt. Also I quoted a proverb about casting one's pearls before swine, which sent her into such a peal of laughter that I think it effectually cured her of her lingering remnants of seasickness. She jumped out of her bunk, squeezed me about the waist, and said:

"You 're the funniest girl I 've ever met—a whole vaudeville act." She added, however, that she liked me, and as she had her arm about me, I came down from my high horse, and averred that her affection was reciprocated. She then told me her name and learned mine. She was book-keeper in a large department store. Her health had been bad, and she had been saving for a long time for this trip to the West Indies.

We decided that we were now well enough to go on deck. As I dressed, I saw her watching me with a rather wondering and curious expression. My navy-blue serge dress was new, and although it was a shapeless article, the color at least was becoming, and with the collar purchased in New York, I felt that I looked very well. I asked her what she thought of my dress. She said evasively:

"Did you make it yourself?"

I said:

"No; mama did."

"Oh," said she.

I did n't just like the sound of that "Oh," so I asked her aggressively if she

did n't think my dress was nice. She answered:

"I think you 've got the prettiest hair of any girl I ever knew."

My hair *did* look attractive, and I was otherwise quite satisfied with my appearance. What is more, I was too polite to let her know what I thought of *her* appearance. Although it was March, she, poor thing, had put on a flimsy little muslin dress. Of course it was suffocatingly hot in our close little state-room, but, still, that seemed an absurd dress to wear on a boat. I offered to lend her a knitted woolen scarf that mama had made me to throw over her shoulders, but she shook her head, and we went up on deck.

To my unutterable surprise, I found a metamorphosis had taken place on deck during my four days' absence. Every one appeared to be dressed in thin white clothes; even the officers were all in white duck. Moreover, the very atmosphere had changed. It was as warm and sultry as midsummer, and people were sipping iced drinks and fanning themselves!

Slowly it dawned upon me that we were sailing toward a tropical land. In a hazy sort of way I had known that the West Indies was a warm country, but I had not given the matter much thought. My father, who had been all over the world, had left my outfitting to mama and me (we had so little with which to buy the few extra things mama, who was more of a child than I, got me!), and I had come away with clothes fit for a land which often registered as low as twenty-four degrees below zero!

My clothes scorched me; so did my burning shame. I felt that every one's eyes were bent upon me.

Both Captain Hollowell and Mr. Marsden greeted me cordially, expressing delight at seeing me again, but although the captain said (in a big, booming voice that every one on deck could hear) that I looked like a nice, blooming peony, I sensitively fancied I detected a laugh beneath his words.

Tragedies should be measured according to their effects. Trifles prick us in

youth as sharply as the things that ought to count. I sensitively suffered in my pride as much from the humiliation of wearing my heavy woolen clothes as I physically did from the burden of their weight and heat. I was sure that I presented a ridiculous and hideous spectacle. I felt that every one was laughing at me. It was insufferable; it was torture.

As soon as I could get away from that joking captain, who *would* keep patting me on the head, and that purser, who was always smiling and showing his white teeth, I ran down to my room, which I had hoped to see as little of as possible for the rest of the voyage.

I sat down on the only chair and began to cry. The ugly little room, with its one miserable window, seemed a wretched intolerable prison. I could hear the sighing of the waves outside, and a wide streak of blue sky was visible through my port-hole window. The moving of the boat and the thud of the machinery brought home to me strongly the fact that I was being carried resistlessly farther and farther away from the only home I had ever known, and which, alas! I had yearned to leave.

It was unbearably hot, and I took off my woolen dress. I felt that I would never go on deck again; yet how was I going to endure it down here in this little hole? I was thinking miserably about that when my room-mate came back.

"Well, here you are!" she exclaimed. "I've been looking for you everywhere! Now what's the matter?"

"N-nothing," I said; but despite myself the sob would come.

"You poor kid!" she said. "I know what's the matter with you. I don't know what your folks were thinking of when they sent you off to the West Indies in Canadian clothes. Are they all as simple as you there? But now don't you worry. Here, I've got six pretty nice-looking shirt-waists, besides my dresses, and you're welcome to any of them you want. You're just about my size. I'm thirty-four."

"Thirty-four!" I exclaimed, astonished

even in the midst of my grief. "Why, I thought you were only about twenty."

"Bust! Bust!" she cried, laughing, and got her waists out and told me to try them on. I gave her a kiss, a big one, I was so delighted; but I insisted that I could not borrow her waists. I would, however, buy some of them if she would sell them.

She said that was all right, and she sold me three of them at a dollar-fifty each. They fitted me finely. I never felt happier in my life than when I put on one of those American-made shirt-waists. They were made sailor-fashion, with wide turnover collars and elbow sleeves; with a red silk tie in front, and with my blue cloth skirt, I really did look astonishingly nice, and, anyway, cool and neat. The fact that I now possessed only two dollars and fifty cents in the world gave me not the slightest worry, and when I ran out of my room, humming, and up the stairs and bang into the arms of Captain Hollowell, he did not say this time that I looked like a peony, but that, "By George!" I looked like a nice Canadian rose.



III

"Do you know," said my room-mate on the night before we reached Jamaica, "that that four-fifty you paid me for those waists just about covers my tips."

"Tips?" I repeated innocently. "What are tips?"

She gave me a long, amazed look, her mouth wide-open.

"Good heavens!" at last she said, "where *have* you lived all of your life?"

"In Quebec," I said honestly.

"And you never heard of tips—people giving tips to waiters and servants?"

I grew uncomfortably red under her amused and amazed glance. In the seven days of that voyage my own extraordinary ignorance had been daily brought home to me. I now said lamely:

"Well, we had only one servant that I can ever remember, a woman named

Sung-Sung whom papa brought from China; but she was more like one of our family, a sort of slave. We never gave her tips, or whatever you call it."

Did I not know, pursued my American friend, that people gave extra money—that is, "tips"—to waiters at restaurants and hotels when they got through eating a meal?

I told her crossly and truthfully that I had never been in a hotel or restaurant in all my life. She threw up her hands, and pronounced me a vast object of pity. She then fully enlightened me as to the exact meaning of the word "tips," and left me to calculate painfully upon a bit of paper the division of two dollars and fifty cents among five people; to wit, stewardesses, cabin boys, waiters, etc.

I did n't tell her that that was the last of my money—that two-fifty. However, I did not expend any thought upon the subject of what was to become of me when I arrived in Jamaica *sans* a single cent.

We brought our bags and belongings out on deck before the boat docked next day. Every one was crowded against the rails, watching the approaching land.

A crowd seemed to be swarming on the wharves, awaiting our boat. As we came nearer, I was amazed to find that this crowd was made up almost entirely of negroes. We have few negroes in Canada, and I had seen only one in all my life. I remember an older sister had shown him to me in church—he was pure black—and told me he was the "Bogy man," and that he 'd probably come around to see me that night. I was six. I never took my eyes once from his face during the service, and I have never forgotten that face.

It was, therefore, with a genuine thrill of excitement and fear that I looked down upon that vast sea of upturned black and brown faces. Never will I forget that first impression of Jamaica. Everywhere I looked were negroes—men and women and children, some half naked, some with bright handkerchiefs knotted about their heads, some gaudily attired, some dressed in immaculate white duck, just like the people on the boat.

People were saying good-by, and many had already gone down the gang-plank. Several women asked me for my address, and said they did not want to lose me. I told them I did not know just where I was going. I expected Mr. Campbell to meet me.

As Mr. Campbell had not come on board, however, and as Captain Hollowell and Mr. Marsden seemed to have forgotten my existence in the great rush of arrival, I, too, at last descended the gang-plank. I found myself one of that miscellaneous throng of colored and white people.

A number of white men and women were hurrying about meeting and welcoming expected passengers, who were soon disposed of in various vehicles. Soon not one of the boat's passengers remained, even my room-mate being one of a party that climbed aboard a bus marked, "The Crystal Springs Hotel."

I was alone on that Jamaica wharf, and no one had come to claim me!

It was getting toward evening, and the sky in the west was as red as blood. I sat down on my bag and waited. Most of the people left on the dock were laborers who were engaged in unloading the ship's cargo. Women with heavy loads on their heads, their hands on their shaking hips, and chattering in a high singsong dialect (I did n't recognize it for English at first!), passed me. Some of them looked at me curiously, and one, a terrifying, pock-marked crone said something to me that I could not understand.

I saw the sun slipping down in the sky, but it was still as bright and clear as mid-day. Sitting alone on that Jamaica wharf, I scarcely saw the shadows deepening as I looked out across the Caribbean Sea, which shone like a jewel under the fading light. I forgot my surroundings and my anxiety at the failure of my employer to meet me; I felt no fear, just a vague sort of enchantment and interest in this new land I had discovered.

But I started up screaming when I felt a hand on my shoulder, and looking up in the steadily deepening twilight, I saw a

smiling face approach my own, and the face was black!

I fled toward the boat, crying out wildly:

"Captain Hollowell! O Captain Hollowell!"

I left my little bag behind me. Fear lent wings to my feet, and I kept crying out to Captain Hollowell as I ran up that gang-plank, mercifully still down. At the end of it was my dear blond purser, and right into his arms unhesitatingly I ran. He kept saying: "Well! well! well!" and he took me to Captain Hollowell, who swore dreadfully when he learned that Mr. Campbell had not met me. Then my purser went to the dock wharf to get my bag, and to "skin the hide off that damned black baboon" who had frightened me.

I ate dinner with Captain Hollowell and the officers of the *Atlas* that night, the last remaining passenger on the boat. After dinner, accompanied by the captain and the purser, I was taken by carriage to the office of "The Lantern."

I don't know what Captain Hollowell said to Mr. Campbell before I was finally called in, for I had been left in the outer office. Their voices were loud and angry, and I thought they were quarreling. I devoutly hoped it was not over me. I was tired and sleepy. In fact, when Captain Hollowell motioned to me to come in, I remember rubbing my eyes, and he put his arm about me and told me not to cry.

In a dingy office, with papers and books scattered about in the most bewildering disorder, at a long desk-table, likewise piled with books and journals and papers, sat an old man who looked exactly like the pictures of Ibsen. He was sitting all crumpled up, as it were, in a big arm-chair; but as I came forward he sat up straight. He stared at me so long, and with such an expression of amazement, that I became uneasy and embarrassed. I remember holding on tight to Captain Hollowell's sleeve on one side and Mr. Marsden's on the other. And then at last a single sentence came from the lips of my employer. It came explosively, despairingly:

"My God!" said the owner of "The Lantern."

It seems that our Quebec friend had been assigned to obtain for "The Lantern" a mature and experienced journalist. Mr. Campbell had expected a woman of the then approved, if feared, type of bluestocking, and behold a baby had been dropped into his lap!

The captain and Marsden had departed. I sat alone with that old man who looked like Ibsen, and who stared at me as if I were some freak of nature. He had his elbows upon his desk, and his chin propped up in the cup of his hands. He began to ask me questions, after he had literally stared me down and out of countenance, and I sat there before him, twisting my handkerchief in my hand.

"How old are you?"

"Seventeen. I mean—I'm going on eighteen." Eighteen was, in fact, eleven months off.

"Have you ever worked before?"

"I've written things."

After a silent moment, during which he glared at me more angrily than ever, he demanded:

"What have you written?"

"Poetry," I said, and stopped because he said again in that lost voice, "My God!"

"What else?"

"I had a story published in 'The Star,'" I said. "I've got it here, if you'd like to see it."

He made a motion of emphatic dissent.

"What else have you done?"

"I taught myself shorthand," I said, "and I can take dictation as fast as you can talk."

He looked frankly skeptical and in no wise impressed.

"How can you do that if you've had no experience as a stenographer?"

"I got a shorthand book," I said eagerly. "It's not at all hard to teach yourself after you learn the rudiments. My sister showed me that. She's secretary to the Premier of Canada. As soon as I had learned shorthand, I acquired practice and speed by going to church and prayer-meetings and taking down sermons."

After a moment he said grudgingly:

"Not a bad idea." And then added, "What do you think you are going to do here?"

"Write for your paper," I said as conciliatingly as I could.

"What?" he inquired curiously.

"Why—anything—poetry—"

He waved his hand in such a dismissing manner that I got up, though it was my poetry, not I, he wished to be rid of just then. I went nearer to him.

"I know you don't want me," I said, "and I don't want to stay. I'm sorry I came. I would n't if I had known that this was a hot, beastly old country where nearly everybody is black. If you'll just get me back to the boat, I know Captain Hollowell will let me go back with him, even if I have n't the money for my fare."

"What about the money I paid for you to come here?" he snarled. "Think I'm going to lose that?"

I did not answer him. I felt enervated, homesick, miserable, and tired. He got up presently, limped over to another table,—he was lame,—poured a glass of water, brought it to me with a big fan, and said gruffly, "Sit!"

The act, I don't know why, touched me. In a dim way I began to appreciate his position. He was a lame old man running a fiery, two-sheet little newspaper in this tropical land far from his native Canada. There was no staff, and, indeed, none of the ordinary appurtenances of a newspaper office. He employed only one able assistant, and as he could not get such a person in Jamaica and could not afford to pay a man's salary, being very loyal to Canada, he had been accustomed to send there for bright and expert young women reporters to do virtually all the work of running his newspaper. Newspaper women are not plentiful in Canada. The fare to Jamaica is, or was then, about \$55. Mr. Campbell must have turned all these things over in his mind as he looked at this latest product of his native land, a green, green girl of seventeen, whose promise that she would "look older next day," when her "hair was done up," carried lit-

tle reassurance as to her intelligence or ability.

He did a lot of "cussing" of our common friend in Canada. Finally he said that he would take me over to the Myrtle Bank Hotel, where accommodations had been arranged for me, and we could talk the matter over in the morning.

While he was getting his stick and hat, the latter a green-lined helmet, I could n't resist looking at some of his books. He caught me doing this, and asked me gruffly if I had ever read anything. I said:

"Yes, Dickens, George Eliot, and Sir Walter Scott; and I've read Huxley and Darwin, and lots of books on astronomy to my father, who is very fond of that subject." As he made no comment, nor seemed at all impressed by my erudition, I added proudly: "My father's an Oxford man, and a descendant of the family of Sir Isaac Newton."

There was some legend to this effect in our family. In fact, the greatness of my father's people had been a sort of fairy-story with us all, and we knew that it was his marriage with mama that had cut him off from his kindred. My Jamaica employer, however, showed no interest in my distinguished ancestry. He took me roughly by the arm, and half leaning upon, half leading me, hobbled with me out into the dark street.

It was about nine o'clock. As we approached the hotel, which was only a short distance from the office of "The Lantern," it pleased me as a happy omen that somewhere within those fragrant, moonlit gardens a band began to play most beautifully.

Mr. Campbell took me to the room of the girl whose place I was to take, and who was also from Quebec. She had already gone to bed, but she rose to let me in. Mr. Campbell merely knocked hard on the door and said:

"Here's Miss Ascough. You should have met her," and angrily shoved me in, so it seemed to me.

Miss Foster, her hair screwed up in curl-papers, after looking at me only a moment, said in a tired, complaining voice,

like that of a sick person, that I had better get to bed right away; and then she got into bed, and turned her face to the wall. I tried to draw her out a bit while undressing, but to all my questions she returned monosyllabic answers. I put out the light, and crept into bed beside her. The last thing she said to me, and very irritably, was:

"Keep to your own side of the bed."

I slept fairly well, considering the oppressiveness of the heat, but I awoke once when something buzzed against my face.

"What 's that?" I cried, sitting up in bed.

She murmured crossly:

"Oh, for heaven's sake lie down! I have n't slept a wink for a century. You 'll have to get used to Jamaica bugs and scorpions. They ought to have screens in the windows!"

After that I slept with the sheet over my head.



IV

I WAS awakened at six the following morning. A strange, singsong voice called into the room:

"Marnin', missee! Heah 's your coffee."

I found Miss Foster up and dressed. She was sitting at a table drinking coffee. She put up the shade and let the light in. Then she came over to the bed, where the maid had set the tray. I was looking at what I supposed to be my breakfast. It consisted of a cup of black coffee and a single piece of dry toast.

"You 'd better drink your coffee," said Miss Foster, wearily. "It will sustain you for a while."

I got a good look at her, standing by my bed. The yellowness of her skin startled me, and I wondered whether it could be possible that she, too, was "colored." Then I remembered that she was from my home. Moreover, her eyes were a pale blue, and her hair a light,

nondescript brown. She had a peevish expression, even now while she made an effort at friendliness. She sat down on the side of my bed, and while I drank my coffee and nibbled my piece of toast she told me a few things about the country.

Jamaica, she said, was the beastliest country on the face of the earth. Though for a few months its climate was tolerable, the rest of the year it was almost unbearable. What with the crushing heat and the dirty, drizzling rain that followed, and fell without ceasing for months at a time, all ambition, all strength, all hope were slowly knocked out of one. There were a score of fevers, each one as bad as the others. She was suffering from one now. That was why she was going home. She was young, so she said, but she felt like an old woman. She pitied me, she declared, for what was before me, and said Campbell had no right to bring healthy young girls from Canada without first telling them what they were coming up against.

I put in here that perhaps I should fare better. I said:

"I 'm almost abnormally healthy and strong, you know, even if I look thin. I 'm the wiry kind."

She sniffed at that, and then said, with a shrug:

"Oh, well, maybe you will escape. I 'm sure I wish you better luck than mine. But one thing 's certain: you 'll lose that Canadian complexion of yours all right."

My duties, she said, would be explained to me by Mr. Campbell himself, though she was going to stay over a day or two to help break me in. My salary would be ten dollars a week and free board and lodging at the Myrtle Bank Hotel. I told her of the slighting reception I had received at the hands of Mr. Campbell, and she said:

"Oh, well, he 's a crank. You could n't please him, no matter what you did." Then she added: "I don't see, anyhow, why he objected to you. Brains are n't so much needed in a position like this as legs and a constitution of iron."

As the day advanced, the heat encroached. Miss Foster sat fanning herself

languidly by the window, looking out with a far-away expression. I told her about my clothes, and how mortified I was to find them so different from those of the others on the boat. She said:

"You can have all my clothes, if you want. They won't do for Canada."

That suggested a brilliant solution of my problem of how I was to secure immediately suitable clothes for Jamaica. I suggested that as she was going to Canada, she could have mine, and I would take hers. The proposition seemed to give her a sort of grim amusement. She looked over my clothes. She took the woolen underwear and heavy, hand-knitted stockings (that Sung-Sung had made for an older brother, and which had descended to me after two sisters had had them!), two woolen skirts, my heavy overcoat, and several other pieces.

She gave me a number of white muslin dresses,—they seemed lovely to me,—an evening gown with a real low neck, cotton underwear, hose, etc.

I put my hair up for the first time that morning. As it curled a bit, this was not difficult to do. I simply rolled it up at the back and held the chignon in place with four bone hair-pins that she gave me. I put on one of her white muslin dresses, but it was so long for me that we had to make a wide tuck in it. Then I wore a wide Leghorn hat, the only trimming of which was a piece of cream-colored mull twisted like a scarf about the crown.

I asked Miss Foster if I looked all right, and was suitably dressed, and she said grudgingly:

"Yes, you 'll do. You 're quite pretty. You 'd better look out."

Asked to explain, she merely shrugged her shoulders and said:

"There 's only a handful of white women here, you know. We don't count the tourists. You 'll have all you can do to hold the men here at arm's-length."

This last prospect by no means bothered me. I had the most decided and instinctive liking for the opposite sex.

The hotel was beautiful, built somewhat in the Spanish style, with a great

inner court, and an arcade that ran under the building. Long verandas ran out like piers on each side of the court, which was part of the wonderful garden, which extended to the shores of the Caribbean.

Miss Foster took me into the hotel's great dining-room, which was like a pleasant open conservatory, with great palms and plants everywhere. There we had breakfast, for it seems coffee and toast were just an appetizer. I never became used to Jamaica cooking. It was mushy, hot, and sweet.

After breakfast we reported at "The Lantern," where Mr. Campbell, looking even fiercer in the day, impatiently awaited us. He wished Miss Foster to take me directly out to Government House and teach me my duties there, as the Legislative Council was then in session. He mumbled off a lot of instructions to Miss Foster, ignoring me completely. His apparent contempt for me, and his evident belief that there was no good to be expected from me, whetted my desire to prove to him that I was not such a fool as I looked, or, rather, as he seemed to think I looked. I listened intently to everything he said to Miss Foster, but even so I received only a confused medley of "Bills—attorney-general—Representative So and So—Hon. Mr. So and So, etc."

I carried away with me, however, one vivid instruction, and that was that it was absolutely necessary for "The Lantern" to have the good-will of the Hon. Mr. Burbank, whom we must support in everything. It seemed, according to Mr. Campbell, that there was some newspaper libel law that was being pressed in the House that, if passed, would bring the Jamaica press down to a pusillanimous condition.

Mr. Burbank was to fight this bill for the newspapers. He was, in fact, our representative and champion. "The Lantern," in return, was prepared to support him in other measures that he was fathering. Miss Foster and I were to remember to treat him with more than common attention. I did not know, of course, that

this meant in our newspaper references to him, and I made a fervent vow personally to win the favor of said Burbank.

We got into a splendid little equipage, upholstered in tan cloth and with a large tan umbrella top, which was lined with green.

We drove for several miles through a country remarkable for its beautiful scenery. It was a land of color. It was like a land of perpetual spring—a spring that was ever green. I saw not a single shade that was dull. Even the trunks of the gigantic trees seemed to have a warm tone. The flowers were startlingly bright—yellow, scarlet, and purple.

We passed many country people along the road. They moved with a sort of languid, swinging amble, as if they dragged, not lifted, their flat feet. Women carried on their heads enormous bundles and sometimes trays. How they balanced them so firmly was always a mystery to me, especially as most of them either had their hands on their hips, or, more extraordinary, carried or led children, and even ran at times. Asses, loaded on each side with produce, ambled along as draggily as the natives.

Miss Foster made only three or four remarks during the entire journey. These are her remarks. They are curious taken altogether:

"This carriage belongs to Mr. Burbank. He supplies all the vehicles, by the way, for the press."

"Those are the botanical gardens. Jamaica has Mr. Burbank to thank for their present excellent condition. Remember that."

"We are going by the Burbank plantation now. He has a place in Kingston, too, and a summer home in the mountains."

"If we beat that newspaper libel law, you'll have a chance to write all the funny things and rhymes you want about the mean sneaks who are trying to push it through."

Even during the long drive through the green country I had been insensibly affected by the ever-growing heat. In the

long chamber of Government House, where the session was to be held, there seemed not a breath of air stirring. It was insufferably hot, though the place was virtually empty when we arrived. I had a shuddering notion of what it would be like when full.

Miss Foster was hustling about, getting "papers" and "literature" of various kinds, and as the legislators arrived, she chatted with some of them. She had left me to my own devices, and I did not know what to do with myself. I was much embarrassed, as every one who passed into the place took a look at me. We were the only two girls in the House.

There was a long table in the middle of the room, at which the members of Parliament and the elected members had their seats, and there was a smaller table at one side for the press. I had remained by the door, awaiting Miss Foster's instructions. The room was rapidly beginning to fill. A file of black soldiers spread themselves about the room, standing very fine and erect against the walls. At the council table, on one side, were the Parliament members, Englishmen, every one of whom wore the conventional monocle. On the other side were the elected members, who were, without an exception, colored men. I was musing over this when a very large, stout, and handsome personage (he was a personage!) entered ponderously, followed by several younger men. Every one in the room rose, and until he took his seat (in a big chair on a little elevated platform at the end of the room) they remained standing. This was his Excellency Sir Henry Drake, the Governor-General of Jamaica. The House was now in session.

By this time I experienced a natural anxiety to know what was to become of me. Surely I was not supposed to stand there by the door. Glancing across at the press table, I presently saw Miss Foster among the reporters. She was half standing, and beckoning to me to join her. Confused and embarrassed, I passed along at the back of one end of the council table, and was proceeding in the direction of the

press table, when suddenly the room reverberated with loud cries from the soldiers of, "Order! order! order!"

I hesitated only a moment, ignorant of the fact that that call was directed against me, and, as I paused, I looked directly into the purpling face of the Governor of Jamaica. He had put on his monocle. His face was long and preternaturally solemn, but there was a queer, twisted smile about his mouth, and I swear that he winked at me through that monocle, which fell into his hand. I proceeded to my seat, red as a beet.

"Great guns!" whispered Miss Foster, dragging me down beside her, "you walked in *front* of the governor! You should have gone behind his chair. What will Mr. Campbell say when he knows you were called to order the first day! A fine reflection on 'The Lantern'!" She added the last sentence almost bitterly.

What went on at that session I never in the world could have told. It was all like an incomprehensible dream. Black men, the elected members, rose, and long and eloquently talked in regard to some bill. White men (government) rose and languidly responded, sometimes with a sort of drawling good humor, sometimes satirically. I began to feel the effect of the oppressive atmosphere in a way I had not yet experienced. An unconquerable impulse to lay my head down upon the table and go to sleep seized upon me, and I could scarcely keep my eyes open. At last my head did fall back against the chair; my eyes closed. I did not exactly faint, but I succumbed slightly to the heat. I heard a voice whispering at my ear, for the proceedings went on, as if it were a common thing for a woman to faint in Government House.

"Drink this!" said the voice, and I opened my eyes and looked up into a fair, boyish face that was bending over mine. I drank that cool Jamaica kola, and recovered myself sufficiently to sit up again. Said my new friend:

"It 'll be cooler soon. You 'll get used to the climate, and if I were you, I would n't try to do *any* work to-day."

I said:

"I 've got to *learn*. Miss Foster sails to-morrow, and after that—"

"I 'll show you after that," he said and smiled reassuringly.

At one there was an adjournment for luncheon. I then became the center of interest, and was introduced by Miss Foster to the members of the press. Jamaica boasted three papers beside ours, and there were representatives at the Parliament's sessions from other West Indian islands. I was also introduced to several of the members, both black and white.

I went to luncheon with Miss Foster and two members of Parliament (white) and three reporters, one of them the young man who had given me the kola, and whose name was Verley Marchmont. He was an Englishman, the younger son in a poor, but titled, family. We had luncheon at a little inn hard by, and while there I made three engagements for the week. With one of the men I was to go to a polo match (Jamaica had a native regiment whose officers were English), with another I was to attend a ball in a light-house, and young Marchmont, who was only about eighteen, was to call upon me that evening.

At the end of the afternoon session, which was not quite so wearying, as it had grown cooler, I was introduced by Miss Foster to the governor's secretary, Lord George Fitzpatrick, who had been smiling at me from behind the governor's back most of the day. By him I was introduced to the governor, who seemed to regard me as a more or less funny curiosity, if I am to judge from his humorous expression. Lord George also introduced me to other government members, and he asked me if I liked candies. I said I did. He asked me if I played golf or rode horseback. I said I did n't, but I could learn, and he said he was a great teacher.

By this time I thought I had met every one connected with the House, when suddenly I heard some one—I think it was one of the reporters—call out:

"Oh, all right, Mr. Burbank. I 'll see to it."

Miss Foster was drawing me along toward the door. It was time to go. Our carriage was waiting for us. As we were going out, I asked her whether I had yet met Mr. Burbank, and she said she "supposed so."

"I don't remember meeting him," I persisted, "and I want very specially to meet Mr. Burbank."

On the steps below us a man somewhat dudishly attired in immaculate white duck, and wearing a green-lined helmet, turned around and looked up at us. His face was almost pure black. His nose was large and somewhat hooked. I have subsequently learned that he was partly Hebrew. He had an enormous mouth, and teeth thickly set with gold. He wore gold-rimmed glasses with a chain, and these and his fine clothes gave a touch of distinction to his appearance. At least it made him stand out from the average colored man. As I spoke, I saw him look at me with a curious expression; then smiling, he held out his big hand.

"I am the Hon. Mr. Burbank," he said.

I was startled to find that this man I had been planning to cultivate was black. I do not know why, but as I looked down into that ingratiating face, I was filled with a sudden panic of almost instinctive fear, and although he held out his hand to me, I did not take it. For that I was severely lectured by Miss Foster all the way back. She reminded me that I could not afford to snub so powerful a Jamaican as Burbank, and that if I had the slightest feeling of race prejudice, I had better either kill it at once or clear out of Jamaica. She said that socially there was absolutely no difference between the white and colored people in Jamaica.

As a matter of fact, I had literally never even heard the expression "race prejudice" before, and I was as far from feeling it as any person in the world. It must be remembered that in Canada we do not encounter the problem of race. One color there is as good as another. Certainly people of Indian extraction are well thought of and esteemed, and my own mother was a foreigner. What should I,

a girl who had never before been outside Quebec, and whose experience had been within the narrow confines of home and a small circle, know of race prejudice?

Vaguely I had a feeling that all men were equal as men. I do not believe it was in me to turn from a man merely because of his race, so long as he himself was not personally repugnant to me. I myself was dark and foreign-looking, but the blond type I adored. In all my most fanciful imaginings and dreams I had always been golden-haired and blue-eyed.



v

I GOT on better with Mr. Campbell after Miss Foster went. He told me it was necessary for us to keep on the right side of Mr. Burbank, who was one of the greatest magnates and philanthropists of Jamaica, but he took occasion to contradict some of Miss Foster's statements. It was not true, he said, that there was no social distinction between black and white in Jamaica. That was the general opinion of tourists in Jamaica, who saw only the surface of things, but as a matter of fact, though the richest people and planters were of colored blood; though they were invited to all the governor's parties and the various official functions; though they were in vast evidence at polo and cricket matches; though many of them were talented and cultivated, nevertheless, there was a fine line drawn between them and the native white people who counted for anything. This he wished me to bear in mind, so that while I should always act in such a way as never in the slightest to hurt or offend the feelings of the colored element, whose good-will was essential to "The Lantern," I must retain my dignity and stoop to no familiarity, which would bring me and "The Lantern" into disrepute with the white element, whose good-will was equally essential.

I think in less than a week my employer began grudgingly to approve of me; in about two weeks we were friends. His eyes no longer glared at me through his thick glasses. Once when I timidly proffered one of my "poems," those same fierce eyes actually beamed upon me. What is more, he published the poem!

Of course it was chiefly my work that won me favor with Mr. Campbell. I came back every day from Government House with accurate and intelligent reports of the debates. I wonder what Mr. Campbell would have said to me had he known that nearly all my first reports were written for me by young Verley Marchmont of "The Daily Call," "The Lantern's" deadliest rival! For the life of me, I never could grasp the details of the debates clearly enough to report them coherently, and so young Marchmont obligingly "helped" me. However, these debates were only a part of my work, though at this time they constituted the chief of my duties.

For a young person in a hot country I was kept extremely busy. Even after my day's work was over I had to bustle about the hotel and dig up society notes and stories, or I had to attend meetings, functions, and parties of various kinds.

One morning after I had been on "The Lantern" about a week, Mr. Campbell handed me a list of my duties as an employee of "The Lantern." Perhaps you would like to know exactly what they were:

1. To attend and report the debates of the Legislative Council when in session.
2. To report City Council proceedings.
3. To report court cases of interest to the public.
4. To keep posted on all matters of interest to Great Britain and Jamaica.
5. To make calls upon and interview at intervals His Excellency the Governor-General, the Colonial Secretary, the Commander of the Forces, the Attorney-General, and other Government officials.
6. To interview elected members when matters of interest demanded.
7. To interview prominent Americans

or those who were conspicuous on account of great wealth.

8. To report political speeches.

9. To report races, cricket matches, polo, etc.

10. To represent "The Lantern" at social functions.

11. To visit stores, factories, etc., and to write a weekly advertising column.

12. To prepare semi-weekly a bright and entertaining woman's column, into which must be skilfully woven the names of Jamaica's society women.

13. To review books and answer correspondence.

14. To correct proof in the absence of the proof-reader.

15. To edit the entire paper when sickness or absence of the editor prevented him from attending.

Mr. Campbell watched my face keenly as I read that list, and finally, when I made no comment, he prompted me with a gruff, "Well?" To which I replied, with a smile:

"I think what you want, Mr. Campbell, is a mental and physical acrobat."

"Do I understand from that," he thundered, "that you cannot perform these necessary duties?"

"On the contrary," I returned coolly, "I think that I can perform them all, one at a time; but you have left out one important item."

"Well, what?"

"Poetry," I said.

My answer tickled him immensely, and he burst into loud laughter.

"Got any about you?" he demanded. "I believe you have it secreted all over you."

I said:

"I've none of my own this morning, but here's a fine little verse I wish you'd top our editorial page with," and I handed him the following:

For the cause that lacks assistance;
For the wrong that needs resistance;
For the future in the distance,
And the good that we can do!

With such a motto, we felt called upon

to be pugnacious and virtuous, and all of that session of Parliament our little sheet kept up a peppery fight for the rights of the people.

Mr. Campbell said that I looked strong and impudent enough to do anything, and when I retorted that I was not the least bit impudent, but, on the contrary, a dreamer, he said crossly:

"If that 's the case, you 'll be incompetent."

But I was a dreamer, and I was not incompetent.

It was all very well, however, to joke with Mr. Campbell about these duties. They were pretty hard just the same, and I was kept rushing from morning till night. There was always a pile of work waiting me upon my return from Government House, and I could see that Mr. Campbell intended gradually to shift the major part of the work entirely upon me.

The unaccustomed climate, the intense heat, and the work, which I really loved—all contributed to make me very tired by evening, when my duties were by no means ended.

Miss Foster's warning that I should have to keep the men at arm's-length occasionally recurred to me, but I dare say she exaggerated the matter. It is true that considerable attention was directed at me when I first came to Jamaica, and I received no end of flowers and candies and other little gifts; but my work was so exacting and ceaseless that it occupied all of my time. I could do little more than pause a moment or two to exchange a word or joke with this or that man who sought flirtations with me. I was always in a hurry. Rushing along through the hotel lobby or parlors or verandas, I scarcely had time to get more than a confused impression of various faces.

There was a ball nearly every night, and I always had to attend, for a little while, anyway; but I did not exactly mingle with the guests. I never danced, though lots of men asked me. I would get my list of guests and the description of the women's dresses, etc., write my column, and despatch it by boy to "The Lantern,"

and I would go to bed while the music was still throbbing through the hotel. Often the guests were dancing till dawn.

Now I come to Dr. Manning. He was the one man in the hotel who persistently sought me and endeavored to make love to me. He was an American, one of a yachting party cruising in the Caribbean. I was not attracted to him at all, and as far as I could, I avoided him; but I could not come out upon the verandas or appear anywhere about the hotel without his seeming to arise from somewhere, and come with his flattering smiles and jokes. His hair was gray, and he had a pointed, grizzled beard. He was tall, and carried himself like a German officer.

He was always begging me to go to places with him, for walks, drives, or boat-trips, etc., and finally I did accept an invitation to walk with him in the botanical gardens, which adjoined, and were almost part of our own grounds.

That evening was a lovely one, with a great moon overhead, and the sea like a vast glittering sheet of quicksilver. The Marine Band was playing. People were dancing in the ball-room and on the verandas and out in a large pagoda in the gardens. Down along the sanded paths we passed numerous couples strolling, the bare shoulders of the women gleaming like ivory under the moonlight. The farther we strolled from the hotel, the darker grew the paths. Across the white backs of many of the women a black sleeve was passed. Insensibly I felt that in the darkness my companion was trying to see my face, and note the effect upon me of these "spooners." But he was not the first man I had walked with in the Jamaica moonlight. Verley Marchmont and I had spent a few brief hours from our labors in the gardens of the hotel.

Dr. Manning kept pressing nearer to me. Officiously and continuously, he would take my arm, and finally he put his about my waist. I tried to pull it away, but he held me firmly. Then I said:

"There are lots of people all around you, you know. If you don't take your arm down, I shall scream for help."

He took his arm down.

After a space, during which we walked along in silence, I not exactly angry, but irritated, he began to reproach me, accusing me of disliking him. He said he noticed that I was friendly with every one else, but that when he approached me my face always stiffened. He asked if I disliked him, and I replied that I did not, but that other men did not look or speak to me as he did. He laughed unbelievably at that, and exclaimed:

"Come, now, are you trying to make me believe that the young men who come to see you do not make love to you?"

I said thoughtfully:

"Well, only one or two come to see me, and—no—none of them has yet. I suppose it 's because I 'm always so busy; and then I 'm not pretty and rich like the other girls here."

"You are pretty," he declared, "and far more interesting than any other girl in the hotel. I think you exceedingly captivating."

For that compliment I was truly grateful, and I thanked him for saying it. Then he said:

"Let me kiss you just once, won't you?" Again he put his arm about me, and this time I had to struggle considerably to release myself. When he let me go, he said almost testily:

"Don't make such a fuss. I 'm not going to force you," and then after a moment, "By the way, why do you object to being kissed?" just as if it were unusual for a girl to object to that.

"I 'll tell you why," I said tremulously, for it is impossible for a young girl to be unmoved when a man tries to kiss her, "because I want to be in love with the first man who kisses me."

"And you cannot care for me?"

I shook my head.

"Why?"

"Because you are an old man," I blurted out.

He stopped in the path, and I could feel him bristling with amazement and anger. Somewhat of a fop in dress, he had always carried himself in the gay man-

ner of a man much younger than he probably was. His voice was very nasty:

"What?"

I repeated what I had said:

"You are an old man."

"What on earth makes you think that?" he demanded.

"Because your hair is gray," I stammered, "and because you look at least forty."

At that he broke into a loud chuckle.

"And you think forty old?"

I nodded. For a long moment he was silent, and then suddenly he took my arm, and we moved briskly down the path. We came to one of the piers, and he assisted me up the little stone steps. In silence we went out to the end of the pier. There was a little rustic inclosure at the end, covered with ivy from some sort of tree that seemed to grow out of the water. We sat down for a while and looked out across the sea. Everything was very dark and still. Presently he said:

"What would you do if I were to take you into my arms by force now?"

"I would scream," I said childishly.

"That would n't do you much good, for I could easily overpower you. You see, there is not a soul anywhere near us here."

I experienced a moment's fear, and stood up, when he said in a kind and humorous way:

"Sit down, child; I 'm not going to touch you. I merely said that to see what you would do. As a matter of fact, I want to be your friend, your very particular friend, and I am not going to jeopardize my chances by doing something that would make you hate me. Do sit down."

Then as I obeyed, he asked me to tell him all about myself. It was not that I either trusted or liked him, but I was very lonely, and something in the quiet beauty of our surroundings affected me, I suppose. So long as he did not make love to me, I found him rather attractive. So I told him what there was to tell of my simple history up to this time, and of my ambitions.

He said a girl like me deserved a better fate than to be shut up in this country; that in a few weeks the hot season would set in, and then I would probably find life unbearable, and surely have some fever. He advised me very earnestly, therefore, not to remain here, but suggested that I go to America. There, he said, I would soon succeed, and probably become both famous and rich. His description of America quickened my fancy, and I told him I should love to go there, but, unfortunately, even if I could get away from this position, and managed to pay my fare to America, I did not know what I would do after arriving there virtually penniless.

When I said that, he turned and took both my hands impulsively and in a nice fatherly way in his, and said:

"Why, look here, little girl, what's the matter with your coming to work for me? I have a huge practice, and will need a secretary upon my return. Now, what do you say?"

I said:

"I say, 'Thank you,' and I'll remember."

At the hotel he bade me good night rather perfunctorily for a man who had recently tried to kiss a girl, but I lay awake some time thinking about what he had said to me.

I suppose every girl tosses over in her mind the thought of that first kiss that shall come to her. In imagination, at least, I had already been kissed many many times, but the ones who had kissed me were not men or boys. They were strange and bewildering heroes, princes, kings, knights, and great nobles. Now, here was a real man who had wanted to kiss me. I experienced no aversion to him at the thought; only a cool sort of wonder and a flattering sense of pride.



VI

It was a cruel coincidence that the dreadful thing that befell me next day should have followed at a time when my young mind was thus dreamily engrossed.

The day had been a hard one, and I know not why, but I could not concentrate my mind upon the proceedings. I felt inexpressibly stupid, and the voices of the legislators droned meaninglessly in my ears. As I could not follow the debates intelligently, I decided that I would stay a while after the council had adjourned, borrow one of the reporters' notes, and patch up my own from them.

So, with a glass of kola at my elbow, and Verley Marchmont's notes before me, I sat at work in the empty chamber after every one, I supposed, had gone, though I heard the attendants and janitors of the place at work in the gallery above. Young Marchmont waited for me outside.

A quiet had settled down over the place, and for a time I scribbled away upon my pad. I do not know how long I had worked—not more than ten or fifteen minutes—when I felt some one come up behind me, and a voice that I recognized from having heard it often in the House during the session said:

"May I speak to you a moment, Miss Ascough?"

I looked up, surprised, but not alarmed. Mr. Burbank was standing by my chair. There was something in his expression that made me move my chair back a little, and I began gathering up my papers rapidly. I said politely, however:

"Certainly, Mr. Burbank. What can 'The Lantern' do for you?"

I sat facing the table, but I had moved around so that my shoulder was turned toward him. In the little silence that followed I felt his breath against my ear as he leaned on the table and propped his chin upon his hand, so that his face came fairly close to mine. Before he spoke I had shrunk farther back in my chair.

He said, with a laugh that was an odd mixture of embarrassment and assurance:

"I want nothing of 'The Lantern,' but I do want something of you. I want to ask you to—er—marry me. God! how I love you!"

If some one had struck me hard and suddenly upon the head, I could not have experienced a greater shock than the

words of that negro gave me. All through the dreaming days of my young girlhood one lovely moment had stood out like a golden beam in my imagination—my first proposal. Perhaps all girls do not think of this; but *I* did, I who lived upon my fancies. How many gods and heroes had I not created who had whispered to me that magical question? And now out of that shining, beautiful throng of imaginary suitors, what was this that had come? A great black man, the “bogy man” of my childhood days!

Had I been older, perhaps I might have managed that situation in some way. I might even have spoken gently to him; he believed he was honoring me. But youth revolts like some whipped thing before stings like this, and I—I was so hurt, so terribly wounded, that I remember I gasped out a single sob of rage. Covering my face with my hands, I stood up. Then something happened that for a moment robbed me of all my physical and mental powers.

Suddenly I felt myself seized in a pair of powerful arms. A face came against my own, and lips were pressed hard upon mine.

I screamed like one gone mad. I fought for my freedom from his arms like a possessed person. Then blindly, with blood and fire before my eyes and burning in my heart, I fled from that terrible chamber. I think I banged both my head and hands against the door, for later I found that forehead and hands were swollen and bruised. Out into the street I rushed.

I heard Verley Marchmont call to me. I saw him like a blur rise up in my path, but behind him I fancied was that other—that great *animal* who had kissed me.

On and on I ran, my first impulse being to escape from something dreadful that was pursuing me. I remember I had both my hands over my mouth. I felt that it was unclean, and that rivers and rivers could not wash away that stain that was on me.

I think it was Marchmont's jerking hold upon my arm that brought me to a sense of partial awakening.

“Miss Ascough, what is the matter? What is the matter?” he was saying.

I looked up at him, and I started to speak, to tell him what had happened to me, and then suddenly I knew it was something I could tell no one. It loomed up in my child's imagination as something filthy.

“I can't tell you,” I said.

“Did something frighten you? What is it, dear?”

I remember, in all my pain and excitement, that he called me “dear,” that fair-haired young Englishman; and like a child unexpectedly comforted, it brought the sobs stranglingly to my throat.

“Come and get into the carriage, then,” he said. “You are ill. Your hands and face are burning. I'm afraid you have fever. You'd better get home as quickly as possible.”

The driver of our carriage, who had followed, drew up beside us; but even as I turned to step into the carriage, suddenly I remembered what Miss Foster had said that first day:

“This carriage is owned by Mr. Burbank. He supplies all the carriages for the press.”

“I can't ride in *that!*” I cried.

“You've got to,” said Marchmont. “It's the last one left except Mr. Burbank's own.”

“I'm going to walk home,” I said.

I was slowly recovering a certain degree of self-possession. Nevertheless, my temples were throbbing; my head ached splittingly. I was not crying, but gasping sobs kept seizing me, such as attack children after a tempestuous storm of tears.

“You can't possibly walk home,” declared Marchmont. “It is at least four and a half miles, if not more.”

“I am going to walk just the same,” I said. “I would rather die than ride in that carriage.”

He said something to the driver. The latter started up his horses, and drove slowly down the road. Then Marchmont took my arm, and we started.

That interminable walk in the fearful Jamaica heat and sun recurs sometimes to

me still, like a hectic breath of hateful remembrance. The penetrating sun beat its hot breath down upon our backs. The sand beneath our feet seemed like living coals, and even when we got into the cooler paths of the wooded country, the closeness and oppressive heaviness of the atmosphere stifled and crushed me.

At intervals the driver of that Burbank carriage would draw up beside us on the road, and Marchmont would entreat me to get in; but always I refused, and a strength came to me with each refusal.

Once he said:

"If you would let me, I could carry you."

I looked up at his anxious young face. His clothes were thicker than mine, and he had a number of books under his arm. He must have been suffering from the heat even as I was, but he was ready to sacrifice himself for what he must have thought was a sick whim on my part. He was nothing but a boy, very little older than I; but he was of that plugging English type which sticks at a task until it is accomplished. The thought of his carrying me made me laugh hysterically, and he, thinking I was feeling better, again urged me to get into the carriage, but in vain.

We met many country people on the road, and he bought from one a huge native umbrella. This he hoisted over my head; I think it did relieve us somewhat. But the whole of me, even to my fingers, now seemed to be tingling and aching. There was a buzzing and ringing in my head. I was thirsty. We stopped at a wayside spring, and an old woman lent me her tin cup for a drink. Marchmont gave her a coin, and she said in a high, whining voice:

"Give me another tuppence, Marster, and I 'll tell missee a secret."

He gave her the coin, and then she said:

"Missee got the fever. She better stand off'n dat ground."

"For God's sake!" he said to me, "let me put you in the carriage!"

"You would not want to, if you knew," I said, and my voice sounded in my own ears as if it came from some distance.

On and on we tramped. Never were there five such miles as those.

Many a time since I have walked far greater distances. I have covered five and six miles of links, carrying my own golf-clubs. I've climbed up and down hills and valleys, five, ten, and more miles, and arrived at my destination merely healthily tired and hungry.

But five miles under a West Indian sun, in a land where even the worms and insects seemed to wither and dry in the sand!

It was about four-forty when we left Government House; it was seven when we reached the hotel. I was staggering as we at last passed under the great arcade of the Myrtle Bank. Though my eyes were endowed with sight, I saw nothing but a blurred confusion of shadows and shapes.

Mr. Marchmont and another man—I think the manager of the hotel—took me to my room, and some one—I suppose the maid—put me to bed. I dropped into a heavy sleep, or, rather, stupor, almost immediately.

The following day a maid told me that every one in the hotel was talking about me and the sick way in which I had returned to the hotel, walking! Every one believed I was down with some bad fever and had lost my mind, and there was talk of quarantining me somewhere until my case was properly diagnosed. I sent a boy for Mr. Campbell.

He came over at once. Grumbling and muttering something under his breath, he stumped into my room, and when he saw I was not sick in bed, as report had made me, he seemed to become angry rather than pleased. He cleared his throat, ran his hand through his hair till it stood up straight on his head, and glared at me savagely.

"What 's the matter with you?" he demanded. "Why did you not report at the office last evening? Are you sick or is this some prank? What 's this I've been hearing about you and that young cub of 'The Call'?"

"I don't know what you've been hear-

ing," I said, "but I want to tell you that I'm not going to stay here any longer. I'm going home."

"What do you mean by that?" he shouted at me.

"You asked me what happened to me?" I said excitedly. "I'll tell you."

And I did. When I was through, and sat sobbingly picking and twisting my handkerchief in my hands, he said explosively:

"Why in the name of common sense did you remain behind in that place?"

"I told you I wanted to go over my notes. I had not been able to report intelligently the proceedings, as I felt ill."

"Don't you know better than to stay alone in *any* building where there are likely to be black men?"

No, I did not know better than that.

And now began a heated quarrel and duel between us. I wanted to leave Jamaica at once, and this old Scotchman desired to keep me there. I had become a valuable asset to "The Lantern." But I was determined to go. After Mr. Campbell left I sought out Dr. Manning. He had offered to help me if I went to America. To America, then, I would go.

Dr. Manning watched my face narrowly as I talked to him. I told him of the experience I had had, and he said:

"Now, you see, I warned you that this was no place for a girl like you."

"I know it is n't," I said eagerly, "and so I'm going to leave. I want to take the first boat that sails from Jamaica. One leaves for Boston next Friday, and I can get passage on that. I want to know whether you meant what you said the other night about giving me a position after I get there."

"I certainly did," he replied. "I live in Richmond, and when you get to Boston, telegraph me, and I will arrange for you to come right on. I myself am leaving to-night. Have you enough money?"

I said I had, though I had only my fare and a little over.

"Well," he said, "if you need more when you reach Boston, telegraph me, and I'll see that you get it at once."

"This relieves me of much anxiety," I said. "And I'm sure I don't know how to thank you."

He stood up, took my hand, and said:

"Perhaps you won't thank me when you see what a hard-worked little secretary you are to be."

Then he smiled again in a very fatherly way, patted my hand, and wished me good-by.

I now felt extremely happy and excited. Assured of a position in America, I felt stronger and more resolved. I put on my hat and went over to "The Lantern" office. After another quarrel with Mr. Campbell, I emerged triumphant. He released me from my contract.

That evening Verley Marchmont called upon me, and of course I had to tell him I was leaving Jamaica, a piece of information that greatly disheartened him. We were on one of the large verandas of the hotel. The great Caribbean Sea was below us, and above, in that marvelous, tropical sky, a sublime moon looked down upon us.

"Nora," said Verley, "I think I know what happened to you yesterday in Government House, and if I were sure that I was right, I'd go straight out and half kill that black hound."

I said nothing, but I felt the tears running down my face, so sweet was it to feel that this fine young Englishman cared. He came over and knelt down beside my chair, like a boy, and he took one of my hands in his. All the time he talked to me he never let go my hand.

"Did that nigger insult you?" he asked.

I said:

"He asked me to marry him."

Verley snorted.

"Anything else?"

A lump came up stranglingly in my throat.

"He—kissed—me!" The words came with difficulty.

"Damn him!" cried young Verley Marchmont, clenching his hands.

There was a long silence between us after that. He had been kneeling all this time by my chair, and at last he said:

"I don't blame you for leaving this accursed hole, and I wish I were going with you. I wish I were not so desperately poor. Hang it all!" he added, with a poor little laugh, "I don't get much more than you do."

"I don't care anything about money," I said. "I like people for themselves."

"Do you like me, Nora?" He had never called me Nora till this night.

I nodded, and he kissed my hand.

"Well, some day then I'll go to America, too, and I'll find you, wherever you may be."

I said chokingly, for although I was not in love with this boy, still I liked him tremendously, and I was sentimental:

"I don't believe we'll ever meet again. We're just 'Little ships passing in the night.'"

Marchmont was the only person to see me off. He called for me at the hotel, arranged all the details of the moving of my baggage, and then got a hack and took me to the boat. He had a large basket with him, which I noticed he carried very carefully. When we went to my state-room, he set it down on a chair, and said with his bright, boyish laugh:

"Here's a companion for you. Every time you hear him, I want you to think of me."

I "heard" him almost immediately; a high, questioning bark came out that package of mystery. I was delighted. A dear little dog—fox terrier, the whitest, prettiest dog I had ever seen. Never before in my life had I had a pet of any kind; never have I had one since. I lifted up this darling soft little dog—he was nothing but a puppy—and as I caressed him, he joyfully licked my face and hands. Marchmont said he was a fine little thoroughbred of a certain West Indian breed. His name, he said, was to be "Verley," after my poor big "dog" that I was leaving behind.

"Are you pleased with him?" he asked.

"I'm crazy about him," I replied.

"Don't you think I deserve some reward, then?" he demanded softly.

I said:

"What do you want?"

"This," he said, and, stooping, kissed me.

I like to think always that that was my first real kiss.



VII

THE trip home was uneventful, and, on account of Verley, spent for the most part in my state-room. The minute I left the room he would start to whine and bark so piercingly and piteously that of course I got into trouble, and was obliged either to take him with me or stay with him.

I used to eat my meals with Verley cuddled in my lap, thrusting up his funny, inquiring little nose, and eating the morsels I surreptitiously gave him from my plate, much to the disgust of some of the passengers and the amusement of others.

Once they tried to take Verley from me,—some of the ship's people,—but I went to the captain, a friend of Captain Hollowell, about whom I talked, and I pleaded so fervently and made such promises that when I reached the tearful stage he relented, and let me keep my little dog.

I had an address of a Boston lodging-house, given me by a woman guest of the Myrtle Bank. A cab took me to this place, and I was fortunate in securing a little hall room for three dollars a week. There was a dining-room in the basement of a house next door where for three dollars and fifty cents I could get meal-tickets enough for a week. My landlady made no objection to Verley, but she warned me that if the other lodgers objected, or if Verley made any noise, I'd have to get rid of him. She gave me a large wooden box with straw in it. This was to be his bed. I did n't dare tell her that Verley slept with me. He used to press up as closely to my back as it was possible to get, and with his fore paws and his nose resting against my neck, he slept finely. So did I. I kept him as clean as

fresh snow. I had tar soap, and I scrubbed him every day in warm water, and I also combed his little white coat. If I found one flea on him, I killed it.

The first day I went into the dining-room next door with little Verley at my heels, every one turned round and looked at him, he was such a pretty, tiny little fellow, and so friendly and clean. The men whistled and snapped their fingers at him. He ran about from table to table, making friends with every one, and being fed by every one.

I was given a seat at a table where there was just one other girl. Now here occurred one of the coincidences in my life that seem almost stranger than fiction. The girl at the table was reading a newspaper when I sat down, and I did not like to look at her at once; but presently I became aware that she had lowered her paper, and then I glanced up. An exclamation escaped us simultaneously, and we jumped to our feet.

"Nora!" she screamed.

"Marion!" I cried.

She was one of my older sisters!

As soon as we recognized each other, we burst out hysterically laughing and crying. Excited words of explanation came tumbling from our lips.

"What are you doing here?"

"What are you?"

"Why are n't you in Jamaica?"

"Why are n't you in Quebec?"

I soon explained to Marion how I came to be in Boston, and then, crying and eating at the same time, she told me of her adventures. They were less exciting, but more romantic, than mine. She had left Quebec on account of an unhappy love-affair. She had quarreled with the young man to whom she was engaged, and "to teach him a lesson, and because, anyway, I hate him," she had run away. She had been in Boston only one day longer than I. She said she had been looking for work for two days, but only one kind had been offered her thus far. I asked her what that was. Her eyes filled with tears, and she said bitterly, that of an artist's model.

Marion could paint nicely, and papa had taught her considerably. It was her ambition, of course, to be an artist. In Quebec she had actually had pupils, and made a fair living teaching children to draw and paint on china. But here in Boston she stood little chance of getting work like that. Nevertheless, she had gone the rounds of the studios, hoping to find something to do as assistant and pupil. Nearly every artist she had approached, however, had offered to engage her as a model.

Marion was an unusually pretty girl of about twenty-two, with an almost perfect figure, large, luminous eyes, which, though fringed with black lashes, were a golden-yellow in color; hair, black, long, and glossy; small and charmingly shaped hands and feet; and a perfectly radiant complexion. In fact, she had all the qualities desirable in a model. I did not wonder that the artists of Boston wanted to paint her. I urged her to do the work, but poor Marion felt as if her best dreams were about to be shattered. She, who had cherished the hope of being an artist, shrank from the thought of being merely a model. However, she had scarcely any money. She said she would not mind posing in costume; but only one of the artists had asked her to do that, a man who wanted to use her in "Oriental studies."

In her peregrinations among the studios she had come across other girls who were making a profession of posing, and one of them had taken her to a large art school, so that she could see exactly what the work was. This girl, Marion said, simply stripped herself "stark naked," and then went on before a large roomful of men and women. Marion was horrified and ashamed, but her friend, a French girl, had laughed and said:

"Que voulez-vous? It ees nutting."

She told Marion that she had felt just as she did at first; that all models experienced shame and embarrassment the first time. The plunge was a hard thing; and to brace the girl up for the ordeal, the model was accustomed to take a drink of whisky before going on. After that it was easy. Marion was advised to do this.

"Just tek wan good dreenk," said the French girl; "then you get liddle stupid. After zat it doan' matter."

Marion remarked hysterically that whisky might not make *her* stupid. She might be disposed to be hilarious, and in that event what would the scandalized class do?

However, Marion was hopeful, and she expected to get the costume work with the artist mentioned before.

As for me, just as I advised Marion to take this easy work that was offered her, so she most strenuously advised me not to waste my time looking for work in Boston, but to go on to Richmond, where a real position awaited me.

It is curious how natural it is for poor girls to slip along the path of least resistance. We wanted to help each other, and yet each advised the other to do something that upon more mature thought might have been inadvisable; for both courses held pitfalls of which neither of us was aware. However, we seized what was nearest to our hand.

Marion got the work to pose in Oriental studies next day, and I, who had telegraphed Dr. Manning, received by telegraph order money for my fare. I at once set out for Richmond, and I did not see my sister again for nearly five years. I left her crying at the station.



VIII

THEY would not let me keep my little dog with me on the train, although I had smuggled him into my Pullman in a piece of hand baggage; but in the morning he betrayed us. Naughty, excitable, lonely little Verley! The conductor's heart, unlike that sea-captain's, was made of stone. Verley was banished to the baggage-car. However, I went with him, and I spent all of that day with my dog among the baggage, not even leaving him to get something to eat; for I had brought sandwiches.

There were a number of other dogs there besides Verley, and they kept up an incessant barking. One of the trainmen got me a box to sit on, and I took my little pet on my lap. The trainmen were very kind to me. They told me they'd feed Verley well and see that he got plenty of water; but I would not leave him. I said I thought it was shameful of that conductor to make me keep my little dog there. The men assured me it was one of the rules of the road, and that they could make no exception in my case. They pointed out several other dogs, remarkable and savage-looking hounds, which belonged to a multi-millionaire, so they said, and I could see for myself that even he was obliged to have them travel this way.

While the men were reassuring me, a very tall man came into the car and went over to these hounds. They were making the most deafening noises. They were tied, of course, but kept leaping out on their chains, and I was afraid they would break loose, and perhaps attack and rend my little Verley.

The tall man gave some instructions to a man who seemed to be in charge of the hounds, and after patting the dogs' heads and scratching their ears, he started to leave the car, when he chanced to see me, and stopped to look at Verley.

Before I even saw his face there was something about his personality that affected me strangely, for though I had been talking freely with the men in the baggage-car, I suddenly felt unconscionably shy. He had a curious, drawling voice that I have since learned to know as Southern. He said:

"Is that your little dog?"

I nodded, and looked up at him.

I saw a man of between thirty-five and forty. (I have since learned he was forty-one.) His face was clean-shaven, and while not exactly wrinkled, was lined on the forehead and about the mouth. It was lean and rather haggard-looking. His lips were thin, and his steel-gray eyes were, I think, the weariest and bitterest eyes I have ever seen, though when he smiled I felt strangely drawn to him, even that first

time. He was dressed in a light gray suit, and it looked well on him, as his hair at the temples was of the same color. As my glance met his curious smile, I remember that, embarrassed and blushing, I dropped my eyes to his hands, and found that they impressed me almost as much as his face. It is strange how one may be so moved by another at the first meeting! At once I had a feeling, a sort of subtle premonition, you might call it, that this man was to loom large in my life for all the rest of my days.

Stooping down, he patted Verley as he lay on my lap, but as he did so, he kept looking at me with a half-teasing, half-searching glance. I felt flustered, embarrassed, ashamed, and angry with myself for feeling so much confusion.

"What 's your dog's name?" he asked.

He was opening and shutting his hand over Verley's mouth. The dog was licking his hand as if he liked him.

"Verley," I replied.

"Verley! That 's a pretty name. Who 's he named for?"

"The young Englishman who gave him to me," I said.

"I see!"

He laughed as if I had confided something to him. I said ingenuously:

"He 's a real thoroughbred," and that caused him to smile again.

He had turned Verley over on my lap, and was dancing his fingers over the dog's gaping mouth, but he still kept looking at me, with, I thought, a half-interested, half-amused expression.

"He 's a fine little fellow," he said.

"Where is he going?"

"To Richmond."

"To Richmond!"

That seemed greatly to surprise him, and he asked why I was going to that city, and if I knew any one there. I said that I knew Dr. Manning; that I had met him in the West Indies, and he had promised me a position as his secretary.

By this time he had let Verley alone, and was staring at me hard. After a moment he said:

"Do you know Dr. Manning well?"

"No; but he has been kind enough to offer me the position," I replied. He seemed to turn this over in his mind, and then he said:

"Put your little dog back in his box, and suppose you come along and have dinner with me."

I did not even think of refusing. Heedless of the frantic cries of my poor little dog, I followed this stranger into the dining-car.

I don't know what we ate. I do know it was the first time I had ever had clams. I did not like them at all, and asked him what they were. He seemed highly amused. He had a way of smiling reluctantly. It was just as if one stirred or interested him against his will, and a moment after his face would somehow resume its curiously tired expression. Also I had something to drink,—I don't know what,—and it came before dinner in a very little glass. Needless to say, it affected me almost immediately, though I only took two mouthfuls, and then made such a face that again he laughed, and told me I 'd better let it alone.

It may have been because I was lonely and eager for some one I could talk to, but I think it was simply that I fell under the impelling fascination of this man from the first. Anyhow, I found myself telling him all of my poor little history: where I had come from; the penniless condition in which I had arrived in Jamaica; my work there; the people I had met; and then, yes, I told *him* that very first day I met him, of that horrible experience I had had in the Government House.

While I talked to him, he kept studying me in a musing sort of way, and his face, which perhaps might have been called a hard or cold one, softened rather beautifully, I thought, as he looked at me. He did not say a word as I talked, but when I came to my experience with Burbank, he leaned across the table and watched me, almost excitedly. When I was through, he said softly:

"Down South we lynch a nigger for less than that," and one of his long hands, lying on the table, clenched.

Although we were now through dinner, and I had finished my story, he made no move to leave the table, but sat there watching me and smoking, with neither of us saying anything. Finally I thought to myself:

"I suppose he is thinking of me as Mr. Campbell and Sir Henry Drake and other people have—as something queer and amusing, and perhaps he is laughing inside at me." I regretted that I had told him about myself one minute, and the next I was glad that I had. Then suddenly I had an eloquent desire to prove to him that really there was a great deal more to me than he supposed. Down in my heart there was the deep-rooted conviction, which nothing in the world could shake, that I was one of the exceptional human beings of the world, that I was destined to do things worth while. People were going to hear of *me* some day. I was not one of the commonplace creatures of the earth, and I intended to prove that vividly to the world. But at that particular moment my one desire was to prove it to this man, this stranger with the brooding, weary face. So at last, awkwardly and timidly, and blushing to my temples and ears, and daring scarcely to look at him, I said:

"If you like, I'll read you one of my poems."

The gravity of his face softened. He started to smile, and then he said very gravely:

"So you write poetry, do you?"

I nodded.

"Go ahead," he said.

I dipped into my pocket-book, and brought forth my last effusion. As I read, he brought his hand to his face, shading it in such a way that I could not see it, and when I had finished, he was silent for so long that I did not know whether I had made an impression upon him or whether he was amused, as most people were when I read my poems to them. I tremblingly folded my paper and replaced it in my bag; then I waited for him to speak. After a while he took his hand down. His face was still grave, but away back in

his eyes there was the kindest gleam of interest. I felt happy and warmed by that look. Then he said something that sent my heart thudding down low again.

"Would n't you like to go to school?" said he.

"I did go to school," I said.

"Well, I mean to—er—school to prepare you for college."

The question hurt me. It was a visible criticism of my precious poem. Had that, then, revealed my pathetic condition of ignorance? I said roughly, for I felt like crying:

"Of course college is out of the question for me. I have to earn my living; but I expect to acquire an education gradually. One can educate herself by reading and thinking. My father often said that, and he's a college man—an Oxford graduate."

"That's true," said the man rather hurriedly, and as if he regretted what he had just said, and wished to dismiss the subject abruptly: "Now I'm going to take you back to your seat. We'll be in Richmond very shortly now."

We got up, but he stopped a minute, and took a card from his pocket. He wrote something on it, and then gave it to me.

"There, little girl, is my name and address," he said. "If there ever comes a time when you—er—need help of any kind, will you promise to come to me?"

I nodded, and then he gave me a big, warm smile.

When I was quite alone, and sure no one was watching me, I took out his card and examined it. "Roger Avery Hamilton" was his name. Judge of my surprise, when I found the address he had written under his name was in the very city to which I was going—Richmond!

I arrived about eight-thirty that evening. Dr. Manning was at the train to meet me. He greeted me rather formally, I thought, for a man who had been so pronounced in his attentions in Jamaica.

As he was helping me into his carriage, Mr. Hamilton passed us, with other men.

"You forgot your dog," he said to me, smiling, and handed me a basket, in which, apparently, he had put my Verley. I had indeed forgotten my poor little dog! I thanked Mr. Hamilton, and he lifted his hat, and bade us good night.

Dr. Manning turned around sharply and looked after him. They had exchanged nods.

"How did you get acquainted with that chap?" he asked me. I was now in the carriage, and was settling Verley in his basket at my feet.

"Why, he spoke to me on the train," I said.

"Spoke to you on the train!" repeated the doctor, sharply. "Are you accustomed to make acquaintances in that way?"

My face burned with mortification, but I managed to stammer:

"No, I never spoke to any one before without an introduction."

He had climbed in now and was about to take up the reins when Verley, at our feet, let out a long, wailing cry.

"I'll have to throw that beast out, you know," he said unpleasantly.

"Oh, no! Please, please don't throw my little dog out!" I begged as he stooped down. "It's a beautiful little dog, a real thoroughbred. It's worth a lot of money."

My distress apparently moved him, for he sat up and patted me on the arm and said:

"It's all right, then. It's all right."

The doctor again began to question me about Mr. Hamilton, and I explained how he became interested in my dog; but I did not tell him about my dining with him.

"You ought to be more careful to whom you speak," he said. "For instance, this man in particular happens to be one of the fastest men in Richmond, though he came originally from farther south. He has a notorious reputation."

I felt very miserable when I heard that, especially when I recalled how I had talked intimately about myself to this man; and then suddenly I found myself disbelieving the doctor. I felt sure that he had slandered Mr. Hamilton, and my

dislike for him deepened. I wished that I had not come to Richmond.

Dr. Manning's house was large and imposing. It stood at a corner on a very fine street. A black girl opened the door.

"You will meet Mrs. Manning in the morning," said the doctor to me, and then, turning to the girl: "'Mandy, this is Miss Ascough. She is coming to live with us here. Take her up to her room." To me he said, "*Good* night." With a perfunctory bow, he was turning away, when he seemed to recall something, and said: "By the way, 'Mandy, tell Toby to put the dog he'll find in the buggy in the stable."

I started to plead for Verley, but the doctor had disappeared into his office. A lump rose in my throat as I thought of my little dog, and again I wished that I had not come to this place. The doctor seemed a different man to the one I had known in the West Indies, and although I had resented his flattery of me there, the curt, authoritative tone he had used to me here hurt me as much.

Curiously enough, though I had not thought about the matter previously, nor had he told me, I was not surprised to find that he was married.

My room was on the top floor. It was a very large and pretty chamber, quite the best room I had ever had, for even the hotel room, which had seemed to me splendid, was bare and plain in comparison.

'Mandy was a round-faced, smiling, strong-looking girl of about eighteen. Her hair was screwed up into funny little braids that stuck up for all the world like rat-tails on her head. She had shiny black eyes, and big white teeth. She called me "chile," and said:

"I hopes you sleep well, honey chile."

She said her room was just across the hall, and if I wanted anything in the night, I was to call her.

My own room was very large, and it was mostly in shadow. Now, all my life I've had the most unreasonable and childish fear of "being in the dark alone." I seldom went to bed without looking under it, behind bureaus, doors, etc., and I

experienced a slight sense of fear as 'Mandy was about to depart.

"Is n't there any one on this floor but us?" I asked.

"No; no one else sleeps up here, chile," said 'Mandy; "but Dr. Manning he hab he labriterry there, and some time he work all night."

The laboratory was apparently adjoining my room, and there was a door leading into it. I went over and tried it after 'Mandy went. It was locked.

I took my hair down, brushed and plaited it, and then I undressed and said my prayers (I still said them in those days), and got into bed. I was tired after the long journey, and I fell asleep at once.

I am a light sleeper, and the slightest stir or movement awakens me. That night I awoke suddenly, and the first thing I saw was a light that came into the room from the partly opened door of the doctor's laboratory, and standing in my room, by the doorway, was a man. I recognized him, though he was only a silhouette against the light.

The shock of the awakening, and the horrible realization that he was already

crossing the room, held me for a moment spellbound. Then my powers returned to me, and just as I had fled from that negro in Jamaica, so now I ran from this white man.

My bed was close to the door that opened into the hall. That was pitch-dark, but I ran blindly across it, found 'Mandy's door, and by some merciful providence my hand grasped the knob. I called to her:

"'Mandy!"

She started up in bed, and I rushed to her.

"Wha' 's matter, chile?" she cried.

I was sobbing with fright and rage.

"I 'm afraid," I told her.

"What you 'fraid of?"

"Oh, I don't know. I 'm afraid to sleep alone," I said. "Please, please, let me stay with you."

"Ah 'll come and sleep on the couch in your room," she said.

"No, no, I won't go back to that room."

"It ain't ha'nted, chile," declared 'Mandy.

"Oh, I know it is n't," I sobbed; "but, O 'Mandy, I 'm afraid!"

(To be continued)



Haunted

By WALTER R. BROOKS

WITHOUT the window lies the rain-streaked night;
 Without, the wet, black pavement shines like glass,
 Mirroring in long, wavering lines of bright,
 Pure gold the haloed street lamps. Figures pass
 Like wind-blown wraiths across the dripping pane,
 And, passing, turn a moment toward the light
 Pale faces, dumbly questioning. The rain,
 Blurring the window, blots them from my sight.
 Within is warmth, and comfort that derides
 Their wistful eyes. I turn away. And still
 Those faces haunt me; one thin pane divides
 My life from their life, my good from their ill.
 What must I do, then? How act? Undismayed,
 Throw up the window, or draw down the shade?