

The
GARDEN OF VISION

A Story of Growth

L. ADAMS BECK

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BOOKS BY L. ADAMS BECK

The Story of Oriental Philosophy

The House of Fulfilment

The Way of Power

The
GARDEN OF
VISION
A Story of Growth

L. ADAMS BECK
(E. Barrington)

1929
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THE GARDEN OF VISION

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PREFACE

A part of the debt of Japan to Zen Buddhism (one aspect of that all-embracing faith) is treated in this book. So far as I know and believe there is no exaggeration of that debt and there is certainly none in my statement of the coincidence of its teachings with those of Western Science. The *Nō* play in Chapter XI of which Lady Murasaki is the heroine is my own and is on the old Japanese model. Since, after the publication of "The House of Fulfilment," countless readers wrote to ask for lists of books in which they could learn more of the subjects there treated I think I may give a very few names of the books which I have found extremely useful and some of which I have quoted.

ESSAYS IN ZEN BUDDHISM, by *Professor D. Suzuki*. (*Luzac, London*).

THE NŌ PLAYS OF JAPAN, by *Arthur Waley*. (*Allen & Unwin*).

THE FIGHTING SPIRIT OF JAPAN, by *E. J. Harrison*. (*Allen & Unwin*).

THE CREATIVE EAST, by *T. W. Mason*.
—*Wisdom of the East Series*.

A LUTE OF JADE, by *L. Cranmer Byng*.
—*Wisdom of the East Series*.

THE NATURE OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD, by
Professor A. S. Eddington. (*The Cambridge Press*).

L. ADAMS BECK
(*E. Barrington*)

Japan, 1929.

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Chapter One

This is the story of certain things which befell in that strange and little-known country Japan—known indeed to many Western people, but only as one may know a beautiful woman passed in the street. A moment one looks and speculates on what may underlie the heart-hiding smile, the mysterious sweetness of the eyes which brush yours and are gone. But the meeting brings no knowledge. She has taken her own way and you remember but do not understand.

Indeed, it is true that one may be a long time in her presence and yet fail to understand. That man, Lafcadio Hearn, who of all Western men drew nearest to her, proclaimed her manifold charms in exquisite words,

studied her, besought her grace with longing, was yet compelled to own when he left her forever that her mysteries were more inscrutable at the end of many years spent at her feet than at the beginning. Perhaps it was because one may recognize a beautiful body, a crystalline keen brain, and yet miss all in missing the secret of the spirit that is the life of both. Therefore this book is an attempt to give what I know of the third of that strange trinity, and since I myself share the 2 deepest faith of Japan it may give wind-driven glimpses of the moon of thought which shines on a world so lovely that it is easier to dwell on what is illumined than on the remote splendor by which it is seen. But glimpses only. What is there that can be wholly loved unless the essence of its being is shared?

This story is strange in its beginning, its present and future, and yet must be told because its bright light may illumine devious ways for others as it did for those happy lovers whom the world might count unhappy because it could not pluck out the heart of

their mystery.

It began in London, in a flat in Camborne Road, large and sunny, overlooking the trees of Kensington Gardens, where many Asiatic people felt themselves at home, English though it was. Its mistress knew not only Japan but many countries of Asia, and her knowledge and sympathy gave her a position apart from that of other Europeans. It was said of her that her windows opened to all the lands of the sunrise, and that was certainly her desire. Her name was Eleanor Ascham.

Many Japanese came, Indians, many Chinese and others, glad of a friend who could understand them, who knew their philosophies, faiths, and the influences which had shaped them into what they were, however strange their shaping might seem to Western minds. Strange indeed, as the Western mind must seem to them. She was one who could calculate the exact width of the gulf, wide or narrow, where the dangerous leap must be made before East and West can join hands.

They called her the Builder of Bridges, because each of the Asiatic countries knows that gulf well, and knows how in the attempt to overleap it many explorers, Eastern and Western, have either shied or missed step and fallen into the boiling torrent of misunderstanding beneath. 3

A bridge, however slender, however quivering in the wind, is better than a leap in the dark, and though no one had less opinion of her own importance than herself she knew that she held hands on either side. This story does not concern her, however, except that many of its flying tints and rainbows were reflected through her mind and could not have been caught without it.

Japanese men and women from diplomatic circles, students of scientific and literary subjects, artists, business men, all came and went in that drawing-room where the ends of the earth met as surely as the mapped Equator girdles it.

But this story turns upon one who came there

oftener than others, profoundly needing at the moment the atmosphere of comprehension it offered. His name, reversed Western fashion, was Yasujiro Ito. A man with powers restrained and chastened in the Japanese manner, which insists that with well-bred persons unseen qualifications should be more sensitively beautiful and valuable than those inevitably displayed for general notice.

A deep-eyed, black-browed man of thirty whose face had a masked beauty and fire hidden under reserve so intense, covered with such skill in listening, that his reputation as a delightful talker was great among English people unqualified to recognize “the perfect artist who plays impeccably upon the wide and subtle registers of Japanese silence.” Tributes to his charm often reached Eleanor Ascham. As thus:

“I don’t like the Japanese. All surface. No real feeling. But I always except that nice Ito. The most sympathetic talker and always says the right thing. He really might be an English gentleman. But of course he’s

been here for years, and they know what to pick up.”

Eleanor Ascham smiled and let it pass. London likes to consider itself a University of Manners, and how could people whose horizon was bounded by London and its fashionable resorts understand the aristocratic type dear to great Japanese artists or the intellectual value of Ito’s black-browed beauty smooth as a polished sword and ready also to glitter into swordplay at a moment’s notice? How could these people understand his life-deep passion for loveliness, worn as silently as a man hides a woman’s face in his heart, an unchanging inspiration working behind all he says and does, unconsciously swaying every word, thought and deed, whether spiritual or material?

She herself knew a very different man in him—one of grave thought and introspection, contemplating the Western World through very calm and disillusioned eyes, the Buddhist indifference to the Mirror of the Passing Show strong upon him. She knew

and sympathized with that attitude, but even to her his purpose remained uncertain. Then he had gone suddenly to Japan and had returned a few months ago. She felt sure that that visit had crystallized some resolve; but though he came to see her as often and with the most trustful friendship, nothing definite had been said. To her he talked freely,—good talk embracing all interests, iridescent with romance and poetry held in check by ironic humor—but behind all she recognized a deep slowly maturing purpose, silent as a taut harp-string waiting the sweeping finger.

They came nearer and nearer to it on those happy evenings when the fire burned bright in the lamp-lit room and two chairs only were drawn up beside it. Then, in his beautiful almost overeducated English, he would hover on the edge of revelation, his face pale in shifting lights and glooms. That was the time he counted upon, and then, too often, just as the good minute dawned, the door would open and another guest set up a new chemical combination that spoiled his hopes.

Yet he always felt his was the first claim. He had known her for some years—ever since his mother, dying with the silent heroism of a Japanese lady, had sent him first to an English tutor and then to Oxford, depriving herself of precious years together because she believed it would be for his good. Eleanor understood as he did the agony of that sacrifice, and this and another deep mutual understanding of shared faith made them friends.

But it had grown much less easy to find her alone since he had come back from his last visit to Japan. A girl—repellent to him from every point of view except that of good looks which no one could deny—had established a kind of right to come and go as she pleased in that happy haven where so much of his life and thought in England had developed. He could never reckon on her absence, and under the strain even his iron Japanese courtesy had shown a tendency to—let us say—rust! Eleanor was quick to observe the signs of disintegration.

“You don’t like Yasoma Brandon. You would like her better if you knew her story. Ask me to tell it some day.”

“I would not waste one of your words on it,” he answered with brevity. “She is the sort of modern young woman—But, no. Why should I criticize your friend? I beg your pardon for what I have said.”

“Certainly my friends mustn’t be criticized to me. Do you suppose I would let anyone criticize *you*?”

A transfiguring smile lit his eyes and mouth with sunshine. At once he looked a boy and a happy one, full of trust and gaiety. 6

“If you order it I shall be her knight and defend her always against all comers. But she has so many friends that she has no need of the samurai sword, and I shall only say ‘Mrs. Ascham’s friend’ . . . That is sufficient.”

Eleanor laughed:

“I won’t go so far as to ask you not to quarrel with her when you meet her here, because I know you can’t help it, and I can leash you both when the cut and thrust is too dangerous. But I wish you’d tell me what you said about us in Japan this time. Things move so quickly here and I have often wanted to ask you. Sometimes I’ve seen in your face—”

Now he was grave and on his guard again. He looked much older; between his knitted black brows was a line of thought.

“Then it is my ill manners if you have,” he said seriously. “Shall a guest criticize a host?”

“But if the host said, ‘The house I live in is imperfect. It could be made better. Help me to think how’—what would you say?”

“That his welcome had made it so pleasant that all else escaped me.” Ito answered with serenity.

“Yes—and when you returned to your own

home you would speak freely! Is that quite honest?”

He was silent a moment. Then:

“No, not quite honest. We must criticize. But you are you and I would not wound you. Though indeed nothing I could say would have any effect in comparison with an ironically honest letter I have just had from a Frenchman—a friend of my two years in Paris who has fled to Saigon from Europe. The West may criticize the West.”

“May I see it? Can honesty harm anyone?”

“Perhaps not. I shall mark certain passages for you to read. Parts are foolish and prejudiced. In some I think he is right. In any case the whole world depends upon the relations between men and women.”

7

“Thank you. Describe him, please. I want to understand. Then read the beginning as far as you will.”

“A good man,” he said reflectively, “and wise—in patches. But injured by an unworthy wife.”

He began reading the French with the same ease as English. His voice was delightful, a male sonority with the shifting quality of music and indescribable sensitiveness to the meanings of words—an expressive instrument indeed for thought! Eleanor had always been able to detach it by its beauty from the voices of any group of people who were speaking.

“My life here would be called dull by many, but to me its inexpressive peace is the first repose I have known since I realized the truth of the life to which I was chained in France. Will you think it strange if I say that much of this is due to my observation of the women here as contrasted with those of Europe and America? Of yours I dare not speak, since Japan is an unknown country for me. What do these Western women give us? Never repose. Stimulation rooted in cold hearts and therefore the freer to practice all the lures,

driven to excess which goads the senses to the apathy in which Delilah may ask and take all from Samson. Puerilities of intellect, which we admire because the ages have taught us how little is to be expected and which we dare not confront with an empty flourish and compliment such as our wiser ancestors used. The instincts of the vulgar shown in their prodigality of luxury, their violence of jealousy, the ape-like avidity and cruelty with which women snatch from each other and from man the commodities that alone satisfy their petty souls.

“And these are the creatures that some 8 great countries have enfranchised and entrusted with a voice in the deliberation of their affairs! On them we stake our future as empires and nations. To their verdict we commit the future of the arts—at the very portals of whose temples they are unworthy to enter! Yes, they paint—and not only their faces. They write, and not only their love-letters. You are aware that I read English as my own tongue. I have studied the literary expression of the English-speaking exponents

of this situation with profound amazement. The genius of the French language debars us from the obscenities commingled with sentiment in which the Anglo-Saxon genius is preeminent, though I admit that certain continental stocks grafted into an Anglo-Saxon setting across the water run them close.”

It paused and took out a pencil, drawing it lightly down certain pages, and gave the letter to Eleanor. She took it and read on.

“As a result of reading many of these writers, male and female, I declare that only woman has the power to corrupt the heart and pen of man and that if she had not led the way he would never have followed. I own his occasional brutalities in former ages, but they were neither decadent nor diseased. Nor did men and women gesticulate together in public over their emotions to urge a jaded passion. Now all is changed. Woman, alone of animals, had made pursuit dull, for we were never able to convince her that enough surpassed any feast—but it has now been

reserved to her to make it supremely ridiculous. Permit me to offer a few modern instances.”

“I think,” said Ito with a gravity very grateful to Eleanor’s sense of humor, “that here you will pass on and begin lower down where it is unmarked.”

She agreed with a Mona Lisa smile imperceptible in flickering firelight and the glimmer of a little silver lamp at his elbow and resumed:

9

“Could fatuity go further? Dear friend, let us vomit and pass on relieved. To what? To those books where male writers also, having eaten the apple tendered by Eve and rendered incoherent by passion, seize the dictionary in quivering fingers and scatter its golden showers Jove-like to impregnate their panting pages with the energies of a god worshiped in all nations. One remarkable sign I observe is a literary interest in the internal organs reserved until lately for the inspection of the medical press. Others spare us no single

intimacy of obstetrics and all the collateral issues. I am told that in the West intelligent men do not read novels though many write them. Is this true? If so, we have the measure of feminine appreciation. In the West none have the courage to affront the Bacchæ in their orgies and to meet the fate of the man who dared. My flight declares my own terrors.

“My friend, you will return before long from the senile follies of the West—I congratulate you! The male spirit of Europe has resolved itself into the type of the dotard who concedes all to the scornful hands of women who even in taking his gifts despise him for yielding them. Its habit of mind is incurably amorous. I believe this type is known in America as the *sugar daddy*; correct me if I err. I see the manhood of Europe and America as the sugar daddy, too senile to contest the domination of the feminine ferment of destruction in their midst. Women and democracy—in both cases organized ignorance and therefore correlated—have already written the doom of the proud

civilizations of the West. If the Far Eastern nations can profit by this lesson the future is their own.”

“Will you read more?” asked Ito. “I think better not!”

“A little.” She continued to read:

10

“And owing to the senile sexuality of the Western man, women are set apart everywhere as a favored caste. No longer are they human—even justice bows before them. Lately in my own country four atrocious murderesses—more than one a murderess of children—were condemned to the guillotine. All were reprieved and will doubtless return in a few years to bless the world and propagate their species. No, my friend, I exaggerate not at all when I say it is not India but the West which is the devotee of the ancient sex worships, untroubled by any of the spiritualities which attend them east of Suez.

“I shall not speak of the gentle unspoiled

women among whom I live. You know them as I do. Nor of the need of calm and balanced mothers for the next generation, unlike the neurotic feminine products of the war with ill-functioning glands, hurrying from business to pleasure and pleasure to business. Nor of the hard undersexed young women who experiment curiously, half carelessly, devoid alike of modesty and wisdom.”

“I think that is enough,” said Eleanor, returning the letter. “Thank you so much.”

“Sex?” said a clear assertive voice which startled them. “So *that* rising tide has covered your abode at last, Eleanor! After all, what is so interesting? I suppose you’ve given her the latest news from Japan, Mr. Ito. I hear things are moving there.”

They had not noticed that the door had opened softly a few minutes before, and the firelight had hidden in its shadows a girl who listened intently, her hand lightly laid on the back of a chair.

“Do you allow a hard undersexed young woman devoid alike of modesty and wisdom to get a word in edgeways?” she asked sardonically.

Defenseless in the presence of a 11 feminine attack, though half despising the convention that tied him, he stood up and, bowing Japanese fashion, drew a chair for Yasoma Brandon to the fire. In her presence he always and instantly assumed his nationality like an armor of steel, and was impenetrable and even more silent than usual.

Eleanor looked up with an unruffled smile:

“Sit down and behave yourself! Listeners deserve what they get, but no one attacked you and you have nothing to defend. Mr. Ito was reading a Frenchman’s letter which doesn’t concern you at all.”

“Yes, and agreeing with every word! Why shouldn’t I say what I think? If he thinks so little of England I think just as little of Japan. All the world says of Japan—‘Little in great

things, great in little things.’ We, at all events, don’t take life with a giggle, and live on a reputation for arranging flowers. We’re tremendously big in everything we do—good or bad.”

“Even in the colossal scale of our bad manners! That really needed no demonstration!” Eleanor said laughing. Her eyes met Ito’s. “Laugh at her. It’s worth no more!” they said gaily. But he was silent, and the torrent flowed on unabated:

“Bad manners? Surely to borrow everything from another nation and then abuse it is not exactly polite? Oh, not only this time! Whenever we meet he says or looks something that makes one furious! If Japan did not like our civilization, why not have let it alone?”

“But then we should have remained uncivilized,” said Ito seriously. “Consider our loss! At a dinner in Paris some years ago one of the guests spoke of us before the Japanese Ambassador as having been uncivilized

before 1868 and then hurriedly apologized. The ambassador agreed with you, Miss Brandon. He said: ‘Pray don’t apologize. You are quite right. Before 1868 we produced great painters and craftsmen. Now we make cannon and battleships like you. We are civilized!’—How true!”

12

Eleanor clapped her hands. There was a menacing silence from Yasoma Brandon. She knew too much of Japanese art to miss the point of that story. Her dead father’s collection of old Chinese and Japanese pictures as well as screens was famous all over Europe and in the Far East, and its beauty had shaped her mind in more ways than as yet she herself understood. Ito had seen it and knew exactly where to drive his dart.

She lifted her head at last.

“One to you! Still, yours is a cramped, borrowed tradition. What about great plays, great literature? Plenty of pretty things, I grant you, but—”

It was grossly unfair and she knew it, but would not withdraw.

“Great in little things and little in great ones,” Ito repeated meditatively. Then lifted his head with flashing eyes. “I accept that. It is true, *but*—according to Europe’s standard of values. The things you think great are little to those of us who think in our own fashion. Money, success, position, to be asked to the best houses! We are little indeed in our care of these. We are great in the things you think little—beauty, joy, a little laughter, and an eternal faith. Yes—in these little things we are great. Trifles, I own, but—we like them. Idle, perhaps, as carving a walnut-sized bit of ivory into a work of eternal beauty. Yet, possibly worth consideration.”

“That isn’t fair. That’s a quibble!” said the other.

An angry jet of flame broke from the crumbling log on the andirons and lit her face. A girl of twenty-four with the broad half-moon-shaped forehead of the Artemis of

the Louvre, brows straight and black as Ito's own, clear-featured, with a scornful red mouth and great dark gray eyes clear as sea-water and alive with possibilities of storm in broken weather—and a rain-cloud of black hair framing all. She sat up straight and arrogantly defiant in her chair. Her figure, shaped for strength and energy, more like a boy's than a woman's, was the extreme of fashion and suited her attitude. Nothing clinging, submissive, or imploring about that young woman, thought Ito, with some answering defiance born of his oriental blood. And then the light flickered and dwindled, and her beauty was something seen in dusky shadows, receding and vanishing, only the eyes left bright and living, the rest secreted in a spiritual loveliness. 13

They knew each other little as yet, but there was an attraction of repulsion between them which led to skirmishings detested by Ito and amusing to the girl. Courtesy forbade flight, manhood obliged him to defend his positions, with the result that they always parted bitterly and drew together again, much against his

liking, to renew some discussion which he could not avoid and hated to renew in Eleanor Ascham's presence.

“And why is it a quibble?” he asked coldly. His years in Europe had not used him to this kind of self-assertion in a young woman. She divined all this and more in his indifferent voice and answered sharply:

“Because you're answering a thing we didn't say and evading what we did say. After all, your great things ought to be the same as other nations' patriotism, decency, honor. These are the same for everybody.”

He answered slowly and still indifferently:

“And in all those you assert that the Japanese people are little? Well—have it so! Believe if you will that my people know little of patriotism, decency, and honor. I grant you that in my religious certainties I place neither a jeweled heaven nor a personal God. . . . But—”

She cut across his words abruptly and unreasonably. "I never said that. I wasn't talking of such things. I was talking of art, and you know it. You don't fight fair."

It was time for intervention. Eleanor felt the undertone of contempt in Ito's thought at this foolish fencing. Certainly Yasoma and her like missed many opportunities of the empire they apparently set first of earthly joys. Women should have perfect self-possession and audacity, but it remains unwise to brandish them. A man may wear a sword with grace but not a woman. She who hides them under the modesty of the odalisque is omnipotent, with the only omnipotence she is likely to desire.

"You have never seen Japan. Mr. Ito is the only Japanese you know. He and I are overwhelmed by the unfortunate impression he has made, but why generalize from it when you can run out to Japan for a month and then come back and hurl destruction all about you with really leisured criticism? Be fashionable as well as brilliant!"

Irony always brought Yasoma into the open, striking wild:

“I?” Her brows were stormy. “I certainly don’t feel inclined to waste my time like that! Life is short enough already. No, thank you! All I mean—and I stick to it—is that Europe has scored success in all the things worth living for, and what right has Asia to preach her stale old moralities about women to us?”

Eleanor measured her sword and thrust.

“You, a university woman ask that? I thought you took honors in history! For one reason, because Asia has studied psychic science for thousands of years and knows more about women than all the psychoanalysts from here to Vienna. That is why Woman never 15 dominates in the East, but the woman of power enough to fight her way to the front is always accepted, because they can’t keep her out. Here we push the whole mass of them into the fighting line and crowd out the men and dominate the situation by numbers. No, in the East they don’t talk of woman; they

know Woman is about as misleading as all the other goddesses. They deal with women, and when one that is strong enough comes along she deals with them! You can't keep back the right people."

Ito listened with quiet enjoyment. Now was the moment for a word to the weakening enemy.

"That is very true. If Europe is the brain of the world—which I cannot really accept—the East at least represents its soul. From the East have come all the faiths and psychics and the roots of all the philosophies. You would not be the ardent Christian you are, Miss Brandon"—his voice was edged with laughter—"if a Jewish young man had not what the Americans call 'put it over' on you!"

Silence. Yasoma Brandon resented the ascription of ardent Christianity so warmly that for a moment wrath strangled her. But no answer occurred to her, and she found Ito's challenge so irritating that the best way of

dealing with the situation was evidently to end it. She rose.

“We always quarrel when we meet, so I’m putting off the pleasure until the next time to give you time to think up your thrusts. After all what does it matter?—I must be getting on to the Twelve Arts’ Ball. May I switch on, Eleanor?”

She did it, and light poured upon a most brilliant figure. She wore a stiff belted coat, like that of a Russian moujik, of shoaling sea-blues and greens playing into each other with living light. It was embroidered at the edges in great Russian designs in pearls and many-colored jewels which had the appearance of gorgeous reality and barbaric splendor. 16

Beneath it, showing when she moved, was a dress of thinnest Eastern transparency covered with peacocks in their pride. Her black hair knotted on her neck was bound with a wide trellis-band of small diamonds, from which at each side sprang a long slender diamond feather, bending and swaying fantastically, like the antennæ of some tropic

butterfly. Her very shoes were extravagantly jeweled.

He had not a notion what the dress was meant to represent, but to him it conveyed the idea of stiff Byzantine splendor—a young empress seen through pre-Renaissance eyes, so loaded with riches that all free movement of the body was inhibited, even the fingers and thumbs stiffened with great rings from which shone, like watchful eyes, smooth polished emeralds, rubies, and ocean-blue sapphires.

His austere Japanese taste revolted at the overdone display. To him it suggested ill breeding, impossible to the most despised class in Japan. Nakedness would have seemed chaster. Beautiful, yes—but beauty dashed with defiance and challenge, which shrieked for admiration, unsexed itself and inspired repulsion instead of desire.

She brushed Eleanor's cheek with a kiss and said coolly to Ito:

“I don't shake hands for two reasons. First, it

isn't your custom. Secondly, I never shake hands with an enemy until the battle is over and one of us down. Good night."

He bowed and escorted her to the lift, closed the doors, and returned to the drawing-room smiling at some thought of his own. He turned off the bright lights at a sign from Eleanor, leaving only one shaded glimmer to aid the firelight in its struggle with brimming shadows.

Chapter Two

“You don’t like her?” Eleanor said, smiling also. “And yet—”

“Yes—and yet?”

“Well, you certainly couldn’t keep the peace tonight. It wasn’t your fault. And yet—I know no one in the world more courageous and, in a way, chivalrous. And her love of beauty—outside moral values, I grant—sweeps her off her feet. She has thought very little, but she has read immensely. There are very few things that don’t interest her. Hers is a most responsive intellect. But she has a difficult life. Rich, alone in the world, no one to be responsible to, spoiled to death by the wild set she lives in, racing madly to be ahead

of the latest fashion—and yet, with it all, the most lovable being the minute you understand her.”

He rejoined politely:

“But extremely difficult to understand, surely?”

She laughed with a note of desperation:

“Oh, impossible to explain anyone to anyone else! But she’s worth knowing. Tremendous energy. A splendid swimmer, walker, rider—an expert at jujutsu—”

He made a little sound of astonishment.

“I thought she hated everything Japanese.”

“Not she! Your national code of honor and patriotism is the very thing to capture her. And her touch of oriental blood—”

“Oriental?”—The shell of politeness cracked in a moment. He was alive and interested.

“You haven’t heard that? Her great-great-grandmother was an Indian princess who eloped with Sir Godfrey Brandon. He was in the employment of the East India Company. He brought her to England after they married, and she made him an excellent wife. A long way back, but to me Yasoma’s beauty is always a blossom of the true East. Her courage and daring are partly English, I suppose. It certainly makes her a thing apart from the average English girl, and more than once I’ve seen the two strains clash. Everyone calls her Soma, but her real name is Yasoma. It has been handed down from the princess.”

He was silent, digesting this very unexpected revelation. She saw it and lapsed into silence, wondering how it would affect their stormy intercourse.

Asiatics hang together and very naturally. Did not a thrill run through India when Japan faced the Russian Bear and humbled his pride? But it was so little—that one drop in the current of noble blood that had run in

Brandon veins since the days of the Queen of France, sister of Henry VIII, who had married Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk! Could it affect anything but the fair outside? Could it engrave the resistant English character with the something which made Yasoma aloof and bewildering at moments, not only to the gay crowd she lived in but also to Eleanor? A million people would answer, “Never!” but Eleanor was not sure. There were moments when alien eyes looked at her from underneath Yasoma’s black brows—a something which flatly denied the code imposed by long English training. Yet might not her recklessness be the backwash reaction of the war—the dry rot that has set in and set free the instinct to snatch at coarse pleasures and easy satisfactions?

To Ito this could not occur. In his 19
intercourse with her he had simply seen the West snarling at the East across “salt, estranging seas” of misunderstanding. He took her for the type of abrupt-mannered English girl willing to take the obvious sexual advantages and sneer at the far more potent

and subtle ones which lie deep below the surface, and in addition he saw the Western crudity which almost invariably asks the wrong questions and has the wrong suspicions.

His silence lasted so long that Eleanor looked at him with interest and expectancy. She understood that the revelation might work as a strange leaven. It would be strange to discover the girl as not wholly one of the highly superior white people who considered they had taught Asia all she knew and were competent to mold the whole world into "civilization!" That consideration would work for peace. On the other hand, the dash of Asiatic blood was that of a conquered people! Japan the unconquered—she who drove back the mighty Kubla Khan with the power of China behind him, she who has been the first to look the white man in the eyes and say, "Thus far and no farther," has many thoughts lying behind the smiling silence with which she surveys the nations of Asia and their overlords. Eleanor felt it would be curious to see how the quarrel would

adjust itself on these new terms of knowledge.

“That’s rather interesting,” he said at last.
“Then I suppose she feels it a disgrace and so overdoes her contempt of everything Asiatic. It accounts for a good deal. I wonder contempt for the Asiatic did not prevent a marriage between her ancestors. I believe that was the general attitude then—if indeed it has ceased.”

Eleanor looked at him in astonishment.

“Disgrace? She thinks—and so does everyone else—that it adds the last touch of romance to her background. One can take what happened a hundred years ago with that kind of gaiety. And as to Asia, she loves Asiatic art, and romance, and history. No!—to be painfully honest, I think she dislikes you—a whim, like so much else! She has never had to check a whim. No one in the world is freer. She’s the last of her family. A few distant cousins—nothing more. No ties, no land to look after, no responsibilities. She

can please herself absolutely and not a soul to hinder her.”

She was conscious that this had not been good fortune so far for Yasoma. It had made her a rallying point for the revolt of youth, a kind of standard-bearer of rebellion. Where others went far she would go a little farther to show that all things are possible to people to whom life has been made easy. Eleanor, who had received a great deal of her careless confidence, could by no means place the line which bounded her in any direction. But if such a line existed she was very sure that whenever it pleased Yasoma to ignore boundaries it would vanish and a good deal else with it. And what that reaction would effect she could not tell.

These, however, were points not to be discussed with any man—especially an Asiatic. The attitude of Asiatic manhood to the sex question is uncertain in this transitional time, and the social history of Japan contains revulsions of feeling stretching from the time of great empresses

and literary ladies who pleased themselves with regard to the other sex, and viewed their love-affairs with irony scarcely hidden beneath lovely lashes, to the epoch when Japan and Europe discovered one another and introduced respectively: a national womanhood taking a stand on its rights and claiming more daily from confounded and bewildered manhood; and a national womanhood, submissive, tender, fluttering to please its masters, stooping perpetually but with no intention of conquering. Of course that attitude is being tinctured with the Western spirit, but the instinct of mastership is still strong in the Island Empire of the East, and as yet Japan and the West find it difficult to be candid with each other on the fundamental. But it was interesting to watch Ito's reaction, tempered impartially by Oxford and hereditary feeling, to what she had said. She knew well he could imagine none but the charming hetæræ of Japan in such an untrammelled freedom, and though the word "respectable" had no existence in his vocabulary he must think the defiance

dangerous.

“And Miss Brandon lives alone!” he said at last, not as a question—for all the world knew that—but as one musing on the oddness of the situation.

“Certainly, except for a most devoted Irishwoman who was her nurse as a baby. Rather a remarkable woman in her way and strongly religious. But of course she has no control whatever over her mistress.”

Eleanor believed this statement, but Ito was quicker to feel that control may exist in terms of influence rather than command with a character like Yasoma Brandon's. At all events he smiled.

“We have these faithful servants in Japan. Naturally, most humble, most dutiful, yet I have known them count for more than a little. It is perhaps best that Miss Brandon has some sensible person in her house.”

There was the faintest touch of sarcasm in the

tone which Eleanor could not wholly accept.

“Sensible people are always an advantage, but she has the kind of strength which will certainly work out her problem to an answer.”

“Happily?”

“What sensible person asks for the happy working-out of a problem? What one wants from it is the stark truth of the answer. You ask that question, and you a Buddhist, bound to look upon all these things from the angle of the most scientific faith in all the world! How can she expect to achieve happiness of the sort you mean? Who does?”

22

He hurried to explain.

“You and I are both Buddhists and it is the glory of Buddhism that we have no dogmas and need not agree. What I really mean is— will she achieve the best that lies in her and make it helpful to the general good? And, now that I have said it, it would sound absurd to anyone in London but you.”

“I seldom rise on a wind of prophecy, but if you ask me I should say yes. I believe in twenty years’ time, perhaps less, there will be developments in her of strength and courage and honesty very surprising to those who know her now. She needs travel and wide intercourse with people of different race and mentality, and then—”

But she pulled herself up. There was no friendliness between the two, and explanation leads to copious misunderstandings. These things must be felt, not worded. He noticed her halt and respected it.

“What did she represent tonight?” he asked with indifference. “It was a very splendid dress.”

“A Russian lady of the time of Ivan the Terrible. Her partner—she always dances with the same man—is to wear an equally gorgeous one of slender chains of steel and copper in orientalized Tatar designs with long red silk tassels and a high crest of shaking gold wires, set with sparkling stones. A so-

called great artist designed it from an old Russian picture. There's a kind of pageant, and he will carry a balalaika and address her in a kind of recitation which begins—'My fair sun, my falcon, my ermine!' He is a very handsome young man, and they will be a splendid pair. They are always together in anything of this sort." 23

It amused her a little to watch the cumulative effect of these revelations upon him. As she expected—distinct distaste.

"And you approve?"—with a look which included Eleanor for a moment in the ranks of the enemy.

"I? I neither approve nor disapprove. I think she might do better with her gifts. I think it rather silly. I also think ripe grapes are more to be relished than green ones. But one has to wait. Processes can't be hurried."

She could see the subject bored him, however, and added:

“Talk to me about yourself. There too I am sure change and processes have been at work. I have seen that since you came back.”

“You Buddhist sage!” he said, half grave, half smiling. “Yes, indeed I have wanted very much to talk with you. Will you give me half an hour now and would it be too much to ask you to say—’Not at home’?”

Orders were given, and he drew his chair nearer and instead of beginning gazed at the fire with dark and thoughtful eyes as if finding words a difficulty.

“Why cannot I think it to you?” he sighed at last.

“I think you nearly can. Shall I begin?”

He made a quick sign of assent.

“You told me long ago of your friendship with Mr. Arima and that he was a devoted Buddhist of the Zen type. You told me that he was starting a place in the hills of Japan

where young men might be prepared to go through the great experience which we call a flash of the higher consciousness, and take as a matter of pure luck, and you call 24 *satori* and take as a matter of discipline.

What I have believed since you came back is that you have known that experience and that you will soon leave us for a very different life. Forgive me if I am wrong or have said too much.”

He looked at her in very great amazement.

“How did you know?”

“How could so great a thing happen to anyone and leave no mark? And are we not friends? But tell me what you can.”

He began slowly and as if weighing every word.

“You know that one fundamental difference between Christianity and our developed Buddhism is that Christianity teaches the doctrine of original sin and we teach that

every living thing—and *all* things live—has the Buddha nature in itself and needs only to realize it to receive joy and peace and universal wisdom. For years I have been aiming at that—a stern discipline—but though I gained much, very much, I did not gain that. This time I went up to Arima in the hills. . . .”

There was a long silence, then after a while, but very softly, she said:

“You gained it?”

He looked up and said nothing, but she was answered.

Presently he spoke again:

“You know we do not think of the Buddha as an historical figure as they do in Ceylon and Siam. He was that of course, but it would not matter to us if he had not been. History like other facts in this phenomenal world matters little in reality as contrasted with ideas. Ideas really make the universe, for each is a

fragment of Realization. Roughly one might say every god is real who is believed in. To us—in our scriptures, as you know, the Buddha as an historical figure is interesting, but in the Idea he is Universal Wisdom, the Law of the Cosmos—the One in whom all Laws are intelligible. You have read the Diamond Scripture? Wonderful!”

25

She repeated “Wonderful!” with dreaming eyes.

“Well, he is every idea that ever was or can be—the very essence of Mind. If one gets a flash of that and realizes it in one’s own mind it—it changes things.”

She said with hesitation: “Have you brought back any light you can give me?”

“The old Buddha light—the knowledge that all the things we see in this world are only apparent and the creation of our own mind. Of course that accords exactly with modern science. But that matters little, though the

realization is an amazing experience. But the joy—the light—No, I cannot speak of it.”

Again a moment’s silence. She said: “I know. Now, what I think you will do is this—”

“Tell me!” he said. A Japanese does not flush with pleasure but his eyes kindled.

“You told me before that your long stay in Europe was to learn its ways and languages thoroughly. You have done that. I think now that you and Arima sama will train men to come to Europe and set forth the marvelous alliance of Buddhism with modern science—especially with physics and psychology here. Perhaps you will come yourself.”

Again his smile made him a boy. He leaned forward vibrating with eagerness.

“Yes—yes. But I must go back first. He is training two brilliant young men to come with me. Nothing monastic except in the training—all absolutely practical. Zen Buddhism is that from beginning to end. Do

you think—will people listen? The aim of Zen is to form the Superman.”

“The best minds will. They must, now that physics and philosophy are running into each other’s channels. But I think 26 something else. I am thinking what might happen if your people asserted their right to leadership of the world in certain forms of beauty and philosophy. India is being discovered as a seer, but not Japan. You have been too humble. Believe me, the stern gospel of your past, your samurai honor, your self-control, is the steel tonic that Europe wants now. That was your religion. Can nations live without religion? They are trying out that problem in the West, and it looks as if the answer might be astonishing.”

“You think that? It’s true. I have always said it. Therefore I am a student, a lover of Zen—the wisest, most intellectual form of all Buddhism. You know, you understand. . . . Is that what Europe wants? But they would laugh now if one spoke of it. I have kept my lips gripped.”

“One must keep them gripped on so many things in England,” she answered a little wistfully. “The Americans are much more eager and open-minded—‘The young impatient masters of the world.’ One may speak and write there as one pleases, and they read and listen and accept and reject with perfect freedom. Here, people simply don’t care a straw about anything Asiatic. But you, perhaps you could speak and write here.”

“Why could I?” He looked at her with profound interest.

“Because you would know how to do it, if you could divest your mind of the belief that there is a prejudice against the Japanese mentality.”

“But there is.”

“Yes, but they would listen to Japan as to no other Asiatic people. You have the reputation for common sense because you have succeeded handsomely in war and commerce. That would give you quite

an authority in the religious field if you spoke up!”

“Religion!” he said with irony. “Hateful word!”

“Call it understanding of natural law. They would like that. Any application of common sense to religion or what they think is science is thought very reliable in England,” she said. “But to be serious”—for Ito was still digesting this—“the West needs an austere gospel. It is almost time for the Puritan reaction to set in which has saved England more than once on the edge of a precipice and then ruined it again with chains and fetters. You once made a discipline effective on all your best men and women. Recover it and tell us your secret. Oh, I know we talk of individuality and the right of self-assertion, but it always ends in the slump of laxity and self-pleasing ineffectuality.” She paused again and quoted:

“‘I have seen four and twenty leaders of revolts—’ and they and their followers

always collapsed into bosh and bad art and license.”

“I see that myself in England—and in France. Also in Japan,” he said slowly. “Yes, it is true. Self-pleasing is always a fatuity in the long run, and the West has known no divine reason why it should bestir itself. But who cares? And we are beginning to walk in the same way.”

“Do you know what Ku Ming said, the old Chinese philosopher who died lately? I think it sums up the whole situation—‘Europe has a religion which satisfies her heart but not her head, and a philosophy which satisfies her head but not her heart.’ Could anything be truer? Well—we know a religion and a philosophy which could do both.”

He looked at her with shining eyes:

“Yes. Truer than true. But if we try—”

It was the first time she had been permitted to see the flame of the spirit in his eyes.

Hitherto he had been silent, a commentator on life—shrewd, and sardonic, learning his lesson in close observation. She looked at him and wondered. Now the sword, dark and keen, of which he had always reminded her, was bared. Preparation had done its work, and the man was ready.

“Not perfectly ready,” he said, answering her thought after a strange fashion of his own. “A year more with Arima sama—and besides he needs my help out there. He is organizing a big thing, and I am to lecture in physics. I worked hard at that. Our men are to be ready for any class in Europe.”

She was so silent, her eyes so large with meditation, that he offered the usual penny for her thoughts and smiled when she shook her head.

“No, not yet. Tell me all your plans and I’ll say what I think. But tell me this first. Did you agree with that letter?”

“I prefer not to say unless I have your orders

and forgiveness beforehand.”

“Both. I think a Japanese comment would be more useful than any.”

“Then, allowing for personal bitterness, I think my friend touches danger-signals. You have said yourself that in Asia men do not recognize Woman as an abstract goddess, but simply women. Simply human beings with certain highly specialized functions which are a national danger if they are exaggerated or neglected. Occasionally swift in intuition, undisciplined and less self-controlled than they should be, and therefore less fitted to control others. Their levity—of course I recognize the exceptions—unfits most of them for governing positions. And possibly, when vicious, more shallowly and hopelessly vicious. Please allow me to end here! I wish to say no more. I shall only agree with you that the exceptional woman must come to the front always. Why make the road easy for the rabble which is utterly unfitted for ruling? For my part, even for men I should make the road much more difficult

than it is. But then I am no believer in the rule of the unfittest—which you call democracy—in any department of life. And does anyone value what they get as a matter of course?”

They sat late into the night while he told her of Arima’s work in the hills, of his strange and subtle personality with its unspoken but unlimited influence on others, and always her sympathy urged him on and her hope supported his; and at last, at first with deep reserve but later with simplicity and confidence, he permitted her to understand so far as the futility of words could express it—little enough!—the splendor of the vision which dims all the world’s radiance for the happy ones who see.

And Ito went away brooding on many things of which Yasoma’s insulting attacks and dislike formed no part.

Eleanor Ascham’s words had been fruitful in much more than she guessed—or he either for that matter—since he had known her. They had coalesced with potent influences

reaching him from Japan, from a man whose strange and beautiful austerity had sown a seed in many hearts of men who watched the European whirlpool with keen speculation. What did it mean—this dance of death, this mad gaiety and loosening of all bonds of honor and family loyalty and obedience to old ideals? Had it been only in France or Germany or the half-civilized hordes of Russia and Central Europe, it would not have surprised Ito or his friends that such peoples should reel under the shock of war. But that this new devil's dance of anarchy and the lust of pleasure should flourish in England, the country of tranquillity, where freedom broadens slowly down from precedent to precedent, was a thing worth watching, a portent of world-wide concern. Like other Asiatics also he was disposed to dread the English transference of the scepter of rule from the hands of men to women. He knew and vibrated to the knowledge that in India secret-eyed men of all the myriad Indian faiths would shudder with distaste at the spectacle of the women thronging to the poll with the unfledged reason and caprice which

were to make or mar their own well-being under Indian skies. Such as Yasoma Brandon! Whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad.

When he left Eleanor Ascham, the way he had chosen but had never mentioned in England grew fairer and fairer in his eyes. A chapter in his life had closed forever, and a way was opening.

Chapter Three

Meanwhile Yasoma, contemptuous of herself and the rest of her world, did not find the Twelve Arts' Ball amusing. It was the old crowd. She knew exactly the paragraphs which some of them would write for the weekly and Sunday papers, vibrating with the information that Lady Gampion in an exquisite turn-out as a peacock had been chatting to Mr. Chappie Meredith—a screaming success as Cesare Borgia. Already one or two had come up to take details of her own dress, and Jimmy Maxwell's. Tomorrow it would appear that Miss Yasoma Brandon had excelled all previous successes as the Russian Yelena and Mr. "Jimmy" Maxwell had ridden into the Albert Hall on a white horse with a purple velvet saddle with silver

nails. The horse appeared to her the only sensible one of the party. She sickened of them, the men and women, some of family, some newly arrived, who eked out their means or reputations for fashion by vulgarly affecting intimacy with all the petty world in which they were so proud to move. Little coteries of poets and novelists whose words would be forgotten long before the breath was out of their bodies, cheap little groups of artists strong in nothing but what they considered the artistic temperament, people indecent, depraved, disastrous, symptoms of the almost mortal disease of their country, all surged past her, bubbling with empty laughter, sexual, unsexed, tedious the moment the glamor of novelty dropped from them; most unspeakably tedious in her eyes. But why had that glamor dropped? She had got along well enough before. She could not tell.

32

After their little special show she sat discontented, with Jimmy Maxwell, in a corner of the supper room veiled with banners and garlands, and looked on silently.

He had suited her well enough hitherto, a good-looking man with hair as black as her own and insolent eyes, which to a certain extent had captured her by their audacity. Only to a certain extent—the final border was uncrossed, though there had been plenty of dangerous intimacy. He detested his wife. It seemed to him the most natural thing in the world that Yasoma should fill the very unaching void left by their alienation. He knew, and Yasoma knew, that their world gave them credit for an arrangement extremely natural and suitable which would certainly end in Jimmy's divorcing his wife, or vice-versa and a light-hearted marriage between the survivors. That arrangement would have the more chance of lasting because her money was absolutely necessary to him and she was "an awfully good sort" about money. All the world knew that.

He sat now fanning her gently and noting with some amusement her slightly frowning brows as she watched the kaleidoscope pattern come and go about them. The latest to pass was his wife with a man better known

than liked who had been her shadow for the last twelve months.

“Emerald’s going it tonight,” he said.

“Thanks be! She’s grown to be such a little devil that things don’t click at all now unless she’s amusing herself. So I cheer her on. Philosophy, isn’t it?”

“Jolly good,” Yasoma answered 33 without conviction. “But I say, Jimmy, have you come into a fortune? That’s a devastating frock she has on. It screams Paris at you.”

“Fortune be blowed!” he said, reaching for another cigarette. “As if I should spend my little all on Emerald when Kent Holland’s ready to do it for me. Besides, I haven’t got a dib. I’m about cleaned out.”

“Do you want me to lend you some, by any chance?” she said, yawning.

“Not such a rabbit by any manner of means, darling, but—”

“I wish you wouldn’t call me darling,” she interrupted irritably. “Everyone calls everyone ‘darling.’ This room is positively sopping with it. ‘Soma’ is good enough for you or anybody. Or you can take a chance on ‘Miss Brandon’ any day you like. Oh, Lord, how sick I am of all this! Give me some champagne.”

She never drank, and Jimmy Maxwell was joyously surprised.

“A very good move. Nothing like it for the blues. Have another?”

She took it, and still there was not the joyous reaction he expected.

“A really good cocktail is what you want. Goes to the spot at once. I’ll get you one.”

“That’s better,” she said at last with a sigh. “Get me another. Before I came here I had a shattering talk and I feel positively dank. I want things and I don’t know what they are. Look at this crowd for heaven’s sake! Look at

that Pan and his Bacchantes and satyrs! The foulest, most disgusting creature that walks, and we all know it and endure him. And no joy in one of them. Nothing but half-drunken idiocy and the craving to be noticed anyhow. Look at Emerald! She's half-seas-over with cocktails, and if I didn't loathe drink I should be the same. I'm as dull as ditch-water and you're duller. The fools we are! *Can't* you do anything to amuse me? You make me drink to keep myself awake.”

34

It was an appeal, half insolent, half real. Before going to Eleanor Ascham's she had stopped a moment in the long room which held her Chinese pictures, and their spiritual beauty had struck a nerve never numb in her and mysteriously responsive to something in Ito's reserves and the coldness in his eyes that held her at resolute arm's length. Why did the leap of a Chinese or Japanese waterfall from misty heights wake a kind of lost passion in one—a spiritual homesickness of which Western art had never known the secret? A memory? A hope? That rabble rout was a strange contrast to the lives of those other

artists. Their grave lives of self-chosen poverty, carelessness of earthly reward, their sparse choice production. She had read of them. She knew.

“Oh, I’m sick of all this! Sick!” she said suddenly.

He put a hot hand on hers.

“Of course you are, darling. You and I are living the most confoundedly unnatural life ever known. It’s a frightful strain on us both; I can tell you my nerves are a mere razzle-dazzle and so are yours. Let’s be sensible. Let’s be happy while we can. Don’t you remember Clementi’s song—

“In delay there lies no plenty.
Then come kiss me, Sweet and Twenty!
Youth’s a stuff will not endure.”

“I’ve never had any youth,” she answered, frowning still. “My mother chevied me from pillar to post—afraid I’d grow up and give away her age, I suppose. Well, she’s gone

where growing old doesn't matter. What a farce it all is!"

She looked in his painted face and doubted whether he were a man at all. Not certainly by any standard earlier than the after-war years.

35

"You look a monumental rabbit tonight, Jimmy," she said politely, "and I can give you no points. Why do we come here?"

"Why indeed?" he said eagerly. "We should be a jolly sight more comfortable on the big sofa in your library. Come along—we've had enough."

She looked at him and looked at herself in the little glass in her jeweled bag and touched her lips with unneeded red.

"Some champagne? No, nothing more. Won't spoil my complexion. I don't mind if we do go. Look at Alison's dress split down to the waist. See what it is to have only one good point and stress it! Look at Ducie with the

water-nymph melting in his arms. I hope she'll hold herself together until they reach the dark corner where they've been half the night. Let's have one more dance and go, unless you want to stay and look after Emerald. She wants looking after, I can tell you. I suppose, as her husband you're responsible. Anyway you're not in the dark as to her doings."

"That's certainly a humorous suggestion," he said carelessly. "I should like to see myself looking after Emerald! And her face if I proposed it. Do come along. Let's go."

But she lingered: "Sometimes I wish, Jimmy, that we had the rouged and perfumed tricks of the old French court. They had grace at all events. This is too awful for words. Vulgarity—screaming to be noticed. Hideous! If they gave a prize for the peak of vulgarity here—everyone would get it."

He would have agreed to anything she said. "Well—and very good fun! Come out of it. Give me your ticket and I'll get your wrap."

His eyes, hot and languid with wine,
said what she could read perfectly well, 36
and it did not matter. Was it worth her while
to fight and hold men off for the sake of
scruples long dead and buried? Why not go
ahead and take all life gives and try to get
some flavor out of it at last? After all—
nothing counts but pleasing oneself, and like
other women she might find some zest in a
secret love-affair. She had skirted the edge so
often—why not fall over and see what
happened? And what she had heard of Ito's
letter stirred her to wild revolt. After all,
women had as much right as men. . . .

Curiously, Ito's face floated between her and
the motley crowd, calm, inscrutable, neither
interested nor contemptuous. A man of
another race, a riddle insoluble. That kind of
rabble neither amused nor repelled him—he
was simply analytic. Yet he could laugh on
the heroic scale when things stirred his
humor. Laugh like a ridiculous boy.

Eleanor Ascham and he seemed to find
eternal interests and energy in all the world

about them. What was the secret and how could she hope to pluck out the heart of his mystery if she jeered at him every time they met? It was not surprising that a man of one of the great Asiatic races should be astonished at these casino manners, but what business had he to criticize? He hadn't criticized? Well, what did that matter? It was easy to see what he thought. And Eleanor Ascham too. She had got into the way of haunting her flat because it was so interesting, even if her friends did call it damned highbrow. She wanted what Eleanor had though she did not even know its name.

But she roused herself. Maxwell was coming back with her ermine wrap. Men's eyes followed him wrathfully. They would gladly have been in his place.

They threaded their way through the people and went down to her car, where the tired-out chauffeur sat in a crumpled heap asleep and forgetting his vigil. He pulled himself together, and they rolled smoothly away.

The gray line of dawn was not yet touching the London roofs, and she was inclined to think those reflections had been a momentary brain-sickness.

“I suppose I drank too much of that beastly champagne, but anyhow it’s comfy now, and I feel all warm and drowsy,” she thought, sinking back luxuriously in the car and her great ermine wrap. She nestled her chin into it until only her great eyes shone out above the drifts of whiteness. Maxwell drew up close beside her and putting his arm about her drew her to him. She leaned her head on his shoulder. That too was part of the drowsy comfort, and he kissed her again and again with slow luxurious delight. It had happened before and meant little enough in their world, but tonight there was a difference known to both of them—an irresistible impulse drawing on and on to an inevitable end of the old relations and beginning of new. Drifting, she wondered what would be left, if anything, when the kisses had to stop, and the question did not seem worth answering. The indolent sensuous drifting was enough.

Suddenly he said: "I loathe Emerald. The very sight of her sickens me. Why, in God's name did I tie myself hand and foot with a fool like that?"

"Oh, don't bother! She does as well as anyone else. One gets tired of everyone. I'm getting tired of you, Jimmy. Dreadfully tired. Let me lie still. I want to be quiet with you. Shall we go for a drive?"

"No—no. I don't want the man. I want to be quiet too. To be alone. Damn him! Why doesn't he get on faster?"

She said nothing but drew close, not returning his kisses but accepting them as she had never done before.

38

The car drew up. She got out languidly, and Maxwell took the key she had given him and opened the door. They went in together, treading noiselessly. It was by no means the first time it had happened, and yet to each of them again there was something new. Something impossible to put in words yet

significant. It was as if they had never been alone together before.

In the morning-room the brown and orange tints of the curtains flickered and changed in the light of the wood fire. The luxury of the room struck a note of its own in the illusion of passion that had immeshed her most worthless self.

They sat on the great divan facing the fire, and again the flames brought out the jewel-lights of the heaped brocaded cushions. She had thrown off her wrap, and her own jewels answered as she lay back among them.

“It’s rather nice to be here—together!” she said, as if to herself.

“Nice? It’s heaven!” he said thickly. “I love you. I’ve always loved you, Soma.” He had caught her hand, and she let it rest as if in utter languor.

“What about Emerald?” she asked with idle sarcasm. The obvious thing to say.

“Emerald? Don’t let’s remember her. What does it matter? Nobody troubles about that kind of thing nowadays.”

She laughed—a sardonic little laugh.

“I certainly shouldn’t trouble about it if I cared about you, Jimmy, but as a matter of fact I don’t. You’re rather a good-natured old rabbit. But that’s all. No—don’t drag me, and I’m tired of being kissed. I assure you it leaves me cold. I don’t care one little tiny damn for you.”

39

But her mood left her half-yielding also, and not for one moment was Maxwell deceived. He knew the moment had come. That was all. If he reasoned it would be afterwards, when he could tell himself that even with Yasoma’s carelessness what had passed must make a bond that he could strengthen at his leisure. Nor did she reason as she lay in his arms. The moment was there, and if it suited her it could recur and if not it would be a closed page forever in the book of her life. If anyone’s life was his own to deal with it was hers!

These things that people used to make such a fuss about, what do they matter really? A gesture of the flesh—a dream to be dismissed at dawn. Things could be just the same between herself and Maxwell, and the dream need never recur unless it meant a great deal more to her than she could believe now.

Yet later—when her surrender had become dream-like even to herself—when Maxwell stood up in the first golden beam of sunlight through the nearly drawn curtains and taking her in his arms kissed her with the air of a master, his triumph struck her broad awake and furious. She thrust him back.

“You’re not to think you have any hold over me. You have none—none, I tell you! If you aren’t careful I shall loathe you. If you ever dare to remind me—” Again she flung him away savagely.

“Go. Get away. I hate you!” she said in a fierce whisper. “I tell you—let me go or you shall pay for it. Never let me see you again! I’m my own. Not yours.”

Incredibly to herself she suddenly longed to see him drop dead at her feet. What had she yielded—what done? The hateful room. The fire was smoldered ash. Dust lay thinly on the lacquered table beside her with his half-smoked cigarette. Brandy and soda stood on it with a half-empty glass. Everything looked jaded, used out, shabby; and he the most of all. A loathsome presence.

40

Half stunned by the change, he stared at her with loose lips.

“This is a nice way to treat a man!” he said. “You give yourself to me, and then—”

“I said I didn’t love you and now I loathe you!” she said. “I would sooner drop dead than see you again. Go, I tell you. Go.”

He tried a caressing tone which infuriated her the more. She would realize the thing better next day, she would remember. She would—

She sprang to the door and throwing it open ran upstairs. There he dared not follow. He

stood a moment or two in the room grown gray and hateful as sin as the morning gold crept in to disclose its nakedness, then slowly picked up his coat and put it on. But of course she would come round—not to tenderness, one could not expect that of Yasoma—but to the old *camaraderie* with this new bond to strengthen his hold. He had always meant it should end like this, and now the future demanded the most careful consideration, that he might make no false step on the new road of their relations. In his own mind he had set marriage as the goal, for reasons many and good, and now the flying opportunity had swept him he was determined to use it for all it was worth.

He waited and heard a door close upstairs, waited five minutes more for the sound of light returning feet, and in vain. Then he went cautiously into the hall, opened and closed the door noiselessly, and was gone. He would write to her at once.

She locked her bedroom door securely and went on into the large dressing-room

where she knew the one center of light in the sleeping house would be awake for her. She needed that companionship now beyond any need in her life. It would strengthen and steady her until she had time to think.

Yes, the firelight threw mystic shadow-shapes up the white walls and one nickering and huge was that of Bridget Conran, her nurse from birth, an Irishwoman fifty years old. She was not asleep. A little lamp burned beside her, and in her lap lay a very well-worn "Pilgrim's Progress," the daily Bible and guide of her Protestant soul. But she never forced her faith on Yasoma, and Yasoma had intellect enough to appreciate and love the greatest of English parables of the Way. She had dwelt in the House of the Interpreter as a child and heard its shining stories. She had trembled in the Valley of the Shadow and had with joy beheld the clear shining hills of Beulah at sunset and the roar of the rejoicing river which is the last barrier between man and the City of Peace. It was like a return to real life from some brief fever-dream of folly to see the quiet waiting

figure. She could not think yet, but it seemed these things mattered little. A dream of the night dissolving in dawn. One could feel exactly the same as before.

So it befell that when she stooped over Bridget and kissed her, her first thought was to gain time to screen herself. Bridget's eyes could be keen—she must baffle them.

“And what are you reading now, Bridgie?”

Bridget smiled at her with perfect understanding.

“’Tis the place where Christian's burden fell off his back, child, and sure he was the glad man to be rid of it, though 'twas he packed it full of fooleries himself and hoisted it upon him. It warmed my heart to think how gay and light he went on without it. Sure a harp to be singing your songs to is the only baggage worth carrying, and a bit to eat tied up in the handkerchief in your hand.”

42

Yasoma sat down and stretched out her feet

to the fire. She had kicked off her jeweled shoes, and Bridget was removing the diamond head-dress from her hair with soft skilful fingers. It was like coming into the heart of quiet to be at home in the flitting firelight, with Bridget's contented voice murmuring of things unseen as she unknotted the black coils and smoothed them with a brush before braiding them. But she herself had brought cruel disturbance with her.

“Sure 'twas he was the light one then!” said Bridget with a kind of tender exultation, “and him legging it along the road like a hare at dawn when the grass will have diamonds on it like your mama's that you had set into them feathers. But the men you'd meet nowadays isn't like him, so they're not! You didn't meet a man yet, my heart's darling, and 'tis that's the reason why you're as full of scorn and pride as the princess that made the young man serve seven years' hard labor before she'd so much as open her eyes to have a look at him.”

“And did he do it?” Yasoma asked. “It's only

in fairy tales they do that kind of thing.” She kept her face turned to the fire.

“And why would it be any other way with them nowadays when the girls does all the hard labor for them and they giving themselves as cheap as cheap that a young man would only have to lift his finger and they running after him and flying like chickens when you’d be feeding them? And still, for all that—”

She paused a moment in braiding the proud black hair into noble braids that fell to the waist and lower. The girl winced a little. She thought of that half-drunken arm about her, the wine-laden breath on her cheek. She thought of Ito’s cool examining gaze as if he had been actually there, and what she had done sickened her. She had laughed at other people’s amours with the best, but now that the thing was hers it had become horrible. Into what hands had she thrust herself, and what hateful alliance had she made with what she despised? He would write—he would come. It would leak out as

everybody's affairs did in the circle she lived in—"the vicious circle," as they called it laughing. And now these thoughts coursed through her like liquid shame while Bridget babbled on.

"Ah, 'twas Christian was the man for keeping on keeping on when the world was agin him. 'Twas no wonder when he got there that they turned out the guard and let fly the guns and trumpets. Sure the young men in London that comes to this house—'tis talk, talk, talk, with them from morning till night, and never a thing done but blethering how grand they'll do it once they take hold. But do you go to bed, my lamb, for the sun's rising, and I'll pray God give you a husband that'll go on his way and you walking after him to be ready when he gives you a look over his shoulder."

It was not the London ideal by any manner of means, and Yasoma with her head on the pillow pulled down Bridget's and kissed her with a smile that stung herself.

"If you dare! I'll pray myself to be a happy

old maid with you to tuck me up every night till I live to be a hundred! And now be off with you!”

And Bridget went off to bed in the little room at hand where she slept every night, jealous to keep watch over her treasure. There was much more under her words than appeared, for she was not at ease. Yasoma at sixteen had had never a thought that she hid from Bridget. There was a strange poetic fiber that thrilled in each, though very different music moved it. But Yasoma at twenty-four was a riddle not to be read. She had flown away into countries where Bridget could never follow. And returning from these expeditions she was always harder, colder—though not to Bridget—more daring, more cynical.

44

What did she believe in? In nothing apparently but what was mysteriously called having a good time—by the really detestable young men and women who filled the house with noise and empty gaiety. Detestable, that is, in Bridget’s eyes. In Yasoma’s they were

the only possible companions for a young person of spirit. But the mischief was well afoot before her mother's death. Her father she had never really known—a disappointed man, cold and proud, with a temper that broke loose at terrifying intervals and drove everyone before him. Perhaps it was because her mother had been such a beautiful frivolous fool that he had decreed Yasoma should be her own mistress at the age of eighteen. He had foreseen something strong and proud in her that would never submit to her mother's little empty humors. And after all that had been a needless precaution—a motor accident while she was driving alone at night with a man who was openly her lover ended her frivolities, and Yasoma was owner of all the dangerous goods and evils her people had prepared for her.

There was only one influence in which Bridget had any hope and that was Eleanor Ascham's. She liked her reserve and trusted her affection for Yasoma, yet trembled to think that it was only intellectual. She would not have put it in that way of course. She

would have said of Mrs. Ascham: “Sure she’s a good woman and she has the decent pride of a lady that’ll make people watch out what they’ll say before her, and ’tis known she can master them with a look and a word.

45

But ’tisn’t the grace of God when all’s said and done—’tis the cold knowledge that’s shut betwixt the leaves of a book, though ’twill go as far and farther with a fool than the other. God be good to us, that’s not what my child wants, though ’tis better than nothing!”

But she slept in peace now while Yasoma lay and watched the coming of the sun with wide sleepless eyes. She shuddered with hatred of the thing she had brought upon herself, and for the first time in her life felt the sharp eyes of fear. And it is a strange truth that the thought that stung more sharply than any other was Ito. His ironic triumph and contempt. “Young women devoid of modesty and wisdom.”

“It’s because I hate him,” she said.

Chapter Four

Thinking in this way, it was not displeasing to Bridget that when she came and let in the midday light Yasoma sat up and telephoned to Eleanor Ascham. “Can I see you today—this evening?”

“Certainly. But I thought you were engaged.”

“So I am, four deep. But what does that matter?”

“Nothing, if not to you. When will you come?”

“Nine. I want to say something important. Please don’t have anyone there. Especially Ito.”

“Poor Ito! Very well. Nine o’clock.”

The colloquy ended, and Yasoma lay back upon her pillows. Bridget “straightening the room,” as she called it, put in her opinion.

“Now that Mrs. Ascham—she’s a grand woman! There’s a breath like the north wind blows off her that’ll get you going like as if you had a glass of whisky inside you. If it had the grace of God running under it—”

“And how do you know it hasn’t, you old sinner?” Yasoma said, plaiting and unplaiting the great silken braid on the pillow beside her. “I don’t think you know the first thing about the grace of God and I’m sure I don’t! But I have a kind of notion it may be a very queer thing and behave in all sorts of ways that little Bridgets wouldn’t expect.”

Bridget shook her head and groaned. 47
For her that river ran in a stagnant canal of peace, and the Tree of Life was planted in hundreds along its border as neatly as a privet hedge. To think of it as a rushing river

pouring through dangerous places accessible to unrepentant sinners and feeding perilous countries was impossible.

“Perhaps there’s no such thing at all,” said Yasoma, composing herself on her pillows. “If Christian had stayed at home in the City of Destruction he might have saved himself trouble and given God less to bother about than when he went off on his own because he had got bored with being comfortable. Let me alone, Bridgie. I want to think.”

But Bridget could not abide this heresy. She quoted, she expatiated, while she arranged the armory of beauty upon the toilet table—an armory she loathed, for what rouge was needed for Yasoma’s golden and damask bloom and what lipstick for lips like a living rose? These were the wares peddled at wicked booths in Vanity Fair, and she saw the Devil’s claw-mark on each and all. But she said no more, and Yasoma pretending to sleep lost herself in stinging realizations.

That mood had not passed when she motored

herself to Eleanor's flat, but it was heavily clouded with doubt. She knew what she meant to tell and keep to herself, but Eleanor must take what she said exactly in the right way or there would be trouble. She was determined to escape Maxwell, but Eleanor must understand her flight from London as a gesture of boredom—no more. The very thought of suspicion turned her white. At Knightsbridge she swerved the car down the Brompton Road for a few minutes, half resolved to keep it all to herself and find some way out.

But where to go? Every place she knew was as well known to Maxwell as to herself. He would take her very flight as a suggestion of pursuit. He knew all the doubles and turnings of any game she could invent.

48

And then, furious at her own hesitation, strong in the assurance that Eleanor would take the amalgamated fiction and truth blindly, she turned the car into the park and so along to Lancaster Gate, flashing through

the serpentine rows of lamps. She had a moment of thought by herself, in the drawing-room where firelight and lamplight contended with moonlight on the mountains of the beautiful old Chinese picture, opposite to which Ito and many others must always sit because it fed their eyes with beauty. She stared at its ascetic loveliness now with a kind of repulsion. It seemed too calm a hearer of what she had to say. A world as far away as the moon. And she had ruined her own.

Eleanor came softly in, her entry so noiseless that Yasoma heard nothing until she spoke. They kissed each other, and the girl pulled a low chair by Eleanor's and clasped her hands upon her knees, looking up with eyes so heavily fringed that they were like stars reflected in black water. The libidinous spell of the night before had slipped off her like a garment and left her cool and young and sad. A new note in Yasoma's many-faceted nature. With quick instinct Eleanor prepared herself for change. The girl began abruptly:

"I want to speak to you terribly badly. Tell

me—did things ever desert you suddenly? I mean—were you ever going on fairly comfortably, contented enough with yourself and all you had and did, and hoping for nothing better than to go on and on enjoying more and more until you got old or died—which is much the same thing? And then in a flash it all became sickening—like 49 seeing the skull under a beautiful face. And you loathed it. You felt you were tied up in a knot. You felt putrid. You thought—there are people in the world who are free and I’m tied. I want freedom more than dying men want water. . . . Did that ever happen to you? Did it?”

She spoke with passion, in short breathless sentences, and her hands on Eleanor’s lap clutched one another as if to keep back and control a flood of revelation that might put her stripped soul at the other woman’s mercy. Suddenly she stopped, frightened at the ease of revelation and a passionate longing to tell the whole. Never—never! She looked up, her lip unbent and trembling.

Eleanor's thoughts were quick as a swallow's darts. It was astonishing in this arrogant brilliance. Yet she had always known Yasoma was wiser than her follies, and a fanatic of beauty. Some awakening was certain to come, but probably by the common road of human destiny. This suddenness made a crisis difficult to treat. She touched Yasoma's hand—she must not be caressed—and said:

“You didn't know this last night. You were yourself.”

“Yes, absolutely. No. I wasn't. Not underneath.”

“Then what happened to crystallize it?”

“Nothing. Nothing more than has often happened before. But suddenly I saw it from the outside and I felt like a drunken fool gone sober in a flash. Danger ahead!”

“Danger?” The cool gray eyes considered her calmly.

“Yes. Nothing to write home about—only the danger of getting sodden with all the stuff I live in. They all looked such hopeless guinea-pigs jiggling round and thinking themselves so grand and advanced. The last word in modernity. The men were worse than the women—let Ito say what he likes! I suppose sexuality has some right place somewhere, but it’s simply a beastliness in the kind of world I live in. They torture and stimulate it until it screams. A man brought me back. I think he was half drunk. I let him kiss my cheek. It wasn’t the first time—other men too! I think I’m getting oozy in the brain, for I don’t believe I’m a bit that sort really. And then I jumped out of the car like mad and into the house, and there in my room all was quiet and Bridgie was reading her everlasting ‘Pilgrim’s Progress,’ and she looked up with the firelight in her dear old eyes and began babbling something about the stupid way I’m burning the candle at both ends. Well, I believe I am. I want to get away for a bit—somewhere safe. Or do you think I’m going soupy by any chance?”

A difficulty not unfamiliar to Eleanor Ascham is that these impulses are not infrequent in the modern world. They spring up, boiling and surging, flinging up the débris of the past like the geysers of Iceland. But also they subside. They have a kind of periodicity in people the world has used too well, and it is probable that after writing “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity,” Solomon returned immediately to the arms of the beautiful Shulamite, and wine was still red in the cup—until a fresh seizure of the world’s transience smote him and the next chapter of that immortal dirge of joy was written. These things may be only the birth-pangs of the soul for a far-off rebirth and with very little practical relation to this life. And yet they cannot be neglected.

But Eleanor, to whom many confidences came, thought this not negligible. After an interval of firelit silence she said:

“If I could suggest anything practical would you do it? Are you in earnest? I don’t a bit want to bother with you if not.”

“Wouldn’t I! You bet!”

“But first—are you certain sure you’re tired of all this? That you won’t find life empty without it?”

“It’s as empty as a drum now. All noise and hollowness. Unless I’m sickening for something horrid. That may explain.”

“Then I’ll tell you what I know. You have gifts—”

“Good heavens, what! Don’t smash my faith in your judgment.”

“Great gifts of courage and obstinacy. And in art—and yes, even in conduct—you like the right things even if you don’t realize your good taste. Also you’re by way of having a brain.”

“No, that I deny with both hands! Who but a fool could live like me—with a pack of rabbits you couldn’t match in the universe? No—”

But Eleanor went on steadily: “In the narrow circle you live in—”

“Narrow! They think they’re the pick of the world.”

Eleanor took no notice of the interruption. “—there’s no room to breathe. They ask for nothing but rubbish, and you dish it out by the ton.”

“Gospel truth! So I do!”

“Well, then, the cure is—know the world. You should be with people who care nothing for your looks and your money. You want to find your real level. You’re living on the most absurd estimate of your consequence.”

“Exactly. But at least my estimate of other people has never been exaggerated.”

Eleanor laughed. “So much the worse. Well, you should travel and get a better proportion of things. Not India. Not our own places. You’d meet people you know—”

Yasoma clenched her hands with joy. 52
Coming! Exactly the advice she wanted and without a word from herself! She could have thrown her arms about Eleanor. “You really think so?” she asked with the right note of doubt.

“Certainly. Put Europe behind you for a bit. Go to Japan—”

And now indeed the pupil stared open-mouthed. “Japan? Gosh! Why?”

“Because China is too disturbed. Go there. Stay at least a year. I may be coming out again then. Live the life of a stranger whom nobody has any reason to think anybody. Stand on your own feet, not your money and good looks—for all I know the Japanese may not even think you passable. And notice things. And find out what life means to other people in quite other ways from those you know. Quite other values, I mean. Now, if you’re in earnest, do that. If not, shut up. I’m not interested in any decadent moods of despair.”

“But in Tokyo—”

“Not in Tokyo. None of the places idle rich tourists haunt. But the sort of places I love.”

“*You* love? But then you’re a Buddhist. You know Asia. You’re able to get in touch.”

“Nobody’s big enough to know Asia, but I am in touch. So can you be. But anyhow what you want is to break out of your set for a while. Then, if you still want it, come back to it. I’m for no wrenches—for no living in society above one’s own merits. It may be you’re only fit for where you live now, and in that case you’ll come back and do the best you can. I *think* you’ll find something else. Go and see.”

Would Eleanor have advised differently if she had known the facts? Yasoma wondered.

“Japan!” she mused, trying to visualize what lay beneath that name so easily said, so full of quaint perfumed mystery. “But no one can ever get to know them. They’re a

fish built like a nut, as the man said about oysters. I'm to sit looking into inscrutability for a year? I don't think I begin to see myself. And what's the good? What could happen?"

Eleanor laughed. "That will depend on whether you have the eyes to see through the charm that traps people so fatally that they think only in terms of pretty vignettes—kimonos, tea-houses, wistaria, cherry-blossom, and the like. All the treacle mush! The Japanese guard their secrets with that surface-stuff quite as effectually as with guns and forts. For all I know they may take you in as easily as they do the people who write 'Letters from Japan,' and 'Chrysanthemum' novels and all that stuff. But I think not. You do at least know a little of Japanese and Chinese art. And you're good at jujutsu. So you have beginnings."

"Jujutsu! But why?" cried Yasoma, all agape.

Eleanor evaded that issue. "I'll try to get an introduction for you from Ito to a man called Arima and—"

“Ito?” Angry red flushed her cheek.

“Ito. Why not? Arima is a most remarkable man. You would learn a good deal if he gave you his sympathy. And otherwise you may only light among the Japanese who are fools like the rest of us. But I assure you there’s a world in Japan which gives you a wonderfully clear statement of things as they are. And they are not troubled with sentiment. If they take you up they won’t be tender with you. But they can teach you a splendid offensive and defensive for life. And jujutsu—it would be the chance of your life!”

There was subtlety in that speech, and she knew it. Again a firelit silence. Yasoma said slowly:

“I might like that. Is it because you know all this that we’ve never trapped you? You only look on and laugh. You’re a stranger and a pilgrim in London. A pilgrim; that reminds me of poor dear Bridgie! How will she take her doom? Imagine her with chopsticks and pickled plums!”

Eleanor laughed confidently. “Ask her if she’d like to be left behind! She’d walk before you into a lion’s den. It isn’t for nothing she loves that book. Everyone who begins to think is a pilgrim, and Bunyan has got the map of the journey in spite of his appalling theology. Besides it’s the loveliest English. Bridget waked up long ago. What do you suppose *she* thinks of London?”

The door opened gently to Eleanor’s Chinese servant—an embodied fidelity who followed her like her shadow, but unlike a shadow lived a life of his own, apart yet attached and embodying much of the hidden beauty of Asia. He silently held out a scribbled visiting-card upon a little gold lacquer tray. She read and gave it to Yasoma, who read it aloud:

“I have a cable recalling me to Japan. I shall leave as soon as I can. Fong says you are engaged. May I come later?”

She would have sent “Tomorrow” for answer, but Yasoma interposed.

“No—no. Let him come up. I want to see his face when he knows I’m going to Japan. He’ll think I’m not worthy of the least tiny cup of tea there. That man simply gnashes his teeth at me. I want to make him angry. And then I’ll take myself off.”

“And you really do mean to go?”

“What I say, I do. I want to get away. Now send for him.”

“Bring up Mr. Ito, Fong.”

The door closed, and Eleanor laid her hand once more on those clasped on her knee.

“Don’t spoil your chances with Ito. I 55 know no one who can open more wonderful doors to you there if you want what I think you want. If not—I can turn you over to Yasuda and Arimoto, and you’ll see a lovely Japan, but—”

“I’ll be myself,” Yasoma said obstinately. “Ito can take me or leave me at that. And I don’t want Yasuda or Arimoto. He can say

what he likes and I'll do what *I* like.”

It struck Eleanor at the moment, and forcibly, how much of the Oriental there was in the girl under all her English veneer. Her name struck a strangeness in the air like the sound of a little silver gong. It had the melody that is sonorous in the names of Japan. Her eyes, so long and dark that like the Princess Damayanti's they might almost be said to touch her hair on either temple, had the beauty of Indian eyes that expresses the gentle trust of the animal and the highest dreams of the mystic and may be both and either at the same moment. The sweetness of her parted lips might shed the rubies of a verse of the Ramayana, and if they dropped the ugliest London jargon instead, that was only because she had been violently forced into an environment which never could be naturally her own.

Tonight she looked a true daughter of the East, though the deep crimson shading into faintest dawn-rose which clothed her had Paris stamped on every flying fold. About her

throat she wore a heavy and beautiful necklace of most unusual design set thick with massed rubies, which, as Eleanor knew but Soma did not, was an ancient symbol of marriage in India. A splendid marriage ring worn about the throat instead of the finger. It had belonged to remote ancestresses, and was old when the princess who had brought it to England was young. Yes—Yasoma breathed full Orient tonight!

Ito entered, bowing to both.

56

“I ask forgiveness. But it was very important to me to see you, Mrs. Ascham. I need your opinion. I hope I may not disturb Miss Brandon, but—”

“She’s obliged to go soon, and you know how glad I always am to see you. Besides we want your opinion here.”

He bowed again, looking slightly bewildered. With Yasoma present the talks had always been an embattled line. Advice? No! That he could not comprehend. Even now she sat on

guard with eyes aware and alert under a screen of silken lashes which to his Far Eastern taste were lovely.

“Miss Brandon is going to Japan very soon and for a considerable time. I can’t come myself at present, as you know. And I wondered whether you would suggest some place where she could be quiet with her maid—an elderly woman. She wants to study art. . .”

That seemed the easiest way to put it, though it was only a collateral issue. Besides, the chilling of Ito’s expression halted her. She knew how he hated the invasion of the tourist and the infection of money-grubbing they carried with them as their shadow. She knew how he loathed the emphasis laid on the petty prettinesses, the patronizing admiration of the dear little Japanese dolls who were to figure and pose for the Westerners’ amusement, the cult of the geisha and the implications underlying it. She saw very well how he would place the rich beautiful girl, with her flirtations on the outbound boat, and her

money to fling about in extravagant buying. What wonder? He knew enough of London to associate her with one of the most worthless sets and unforgivable license of behavior. Eleanor was really afraid that some irrevocable gesture or word might escape him and antagonize them forever.

But the impenetrable reserve of the Japanese was salvation. He looked gravely at Yasoma and said politely that he hoped his country would have the good fortune to please her. It would be cold if she were going soon. She would anticipate the earliest plum-blossom, not to mention the cherry-blossom. But—

57

“But I’m not going just to see pretty things,” she broke in, and then was herself bewildered. She knew that she was flying for her life, but what else was she going to do? Indeed she did not know! She and Ito alike looked to Eleanor for explanation. It was forthcoming.

“Miss Brandon wants to make a real study of

Japanese and Chinese art and also to learn as much of the colloquial as she can. She's very quick at languages. She has learned Latin and Greek and can read both. She speaks French and German. Now she wants to add an Asiatic language to her store."

But Ito gazed with astonishment that even his courtly training could not hide. Yasoma as a scholar—that vivid butterfly of the electric lights! He could not realize the educational opportunities that the English girl has thrust upon her at school and in the university, and since every word Eleanor said must be true he saw Yasoma as the seeker after learning, deep-dipped in the wisdom of the ages. Surprise left him inarticulate but still no sympathy was awakened. He was certain that he did not want her money, her learning, or her personality in Japan. When he could speak he said stiffly:

"Such learning is astonishing in a young lady, but would it not be—of course I only offer a suggestion—but would it not be more natural and useful if she studied the languages of the

British dominions? Let us say, India. Sanskrit for scholarship and Hindi for colloquial. I know Professor Lalpat Ram and—” He stopped and added politely, “But you know best.”

Eleanor knew best inasmuch as she was certain that nothing would be achieved while Yasoma sat fixing him with those challenging eyes. She looked for a moment at her with that all-speaking expression which a candid woman uses as effectually as the schemer. It said: “Do go—this very minute! Can’t you see I can do nothing with him while you are here?”

58

And Yasoma, reading, rose instantly, and woman-like nearly wrecked her chances with a parting shot.

“Well, I must go. The Grantleys are taking me to ‘The Merry Eden.’ I quite realize that Mr. Ito thinks I may contaminate Japan. He had better have me declared contraband at Yokohama.”

Ito shuddered almost visibly. Six performances of "The Merry Eden" were being given by a small society which apparently existed for the purpose of sampling privately the worst that could be said and done on the stage before diluting the concentrated essence for general consumption. Very often the essence was a split cup of the gods too ambrosial for a world unawakened to its opportunities. Sometimes it succeeded, and the result would be a play over which the censor hovered with yearning pencil and then with a harvest of erasures passed on to purify still further the popular taste. As a distinguished visitor who knew everybody, Ito had been invited to the first performance of the current production, and though Japan is by no means squeamish had left at the end of the second act for the simple reason that it disgusted him physically to see men and women acting in such a play together. The actress is a late importation in Japan, though now securely established, and his taste, trained in a very different school, shied at the situation. And now this young woman was going merrily off to see what had

revolted him against the people who could write, act, and see such a play. In that moment he believed her utterly worthless.

Nevertheless, with iron politeness he took her to the lift and bowed as she waved a careless angry farewell. She could partly guess what he was thinking, though understanding none of the reasons for it, and it hardened her determination to go to Japan. Japan indeed! Its only merit to her was that she could scarcely get farther from England. Was it his freehold, that he should resolve to keep her out of it? She would do exactly as she pleased. And if she did not go to “The Merry Eden,” it was certainly not because he had opened his eyes on her for that astonished moment. It was because a shock met her when she reached home. A note from Maxwell, who had called twice in vain.

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“I say, darling, I could have sworn you’d fix up a meeting today. Are you going to ‘The Merry Eden,’ with the Grantleys, because if so we could get away before the last act and go to the club and then back

together. I don't even try to put over what I've been feeling all day, but you know because I can swear you're feeling the same. Ring up when you get this—don't lose one minute. I have something tremendous to say. Now ring.

J. M.”

It was Bridget who gave her the note. To Bridget she turned when she had thrown it into the fire.

“If Mr. Maxwell ever comes here again tell them to say ‘Not at Home.’ *I am not at home!* I'm not going out tonight. I have things to think of—”

She sat by the fire, shaking with cold loathing and hatred. The brute! And into such hands she had put herself. If Eleanor and Ito could know the truth what would they think! At all events it mapped her future. London was over for good and all.

Bridget brought in her bedtime drink of

lemon-water and then sat stitching lace of spider-web fineness on softest silk for her wearing. Everything that the general public did not see must be made by her own hands for her child. Paris and London might care for the outside, but the invisible was love's own work. Yasoma watched her moodily. Bridget's presence never bored or irritated her any more than that of a beloved dog. It was always soothing, understanding, and unpenetrating. It guarded the gates but did not follow into the sealed chambers.

After a while she said as casually as she could:

“Bridgie dear, we've never traveled out of Europe except that time we went to Algiers and Egypt, and you liked that. What would you say if we went to Japan for a year? It's very pretty and there are lovely things to buy.”

Bridget did not even interrupt her work.

“Well, I heard say they're the queer little

people entirely, with their idols and their chopsticks, and still they have the sense of the world in their heads for all! Maybe they're only pretending, all said and done! Maybe they know a lot they don't tell, for I'm told they have a silence on them that they wouldn't break, not if you took a whip to them, unless it pleased themselves. But what put it into your head to go to that queer place, my lamb?"

In this portrait of a people Yasoma could certainly recognize Ito. That was the way with Bridget. You mentioned a subject you could swear she knew nothing about, and she had already arrived and was sitting all unconscious at the heart of it. "I heard say," she would reply, and after all no one had told her. It was inspired mother wit. She sat there now, calm, florid, and unruffled, as unquestioningly ready for Japan as for death if Yasoma led the way; not profoundly interested in the adventure, for her spiritual experience transcended all earthly oddities, but contented and prepared. Yet Yasoma felt the need of buttressing her

own decision.

“Mrs. Ascham wants me to go, Bridgie. She thinks I’ve had enough of London. She thinks I shall be wiser if I see the world. Do you?”

Bridget laid down her work.

“Well, if it was the last word to pass my lips I’d say Mrs. Ascham has the sense of six, for as quiet as she is. If ’tis *she* says it I wouldn’t care how queer they are but I’d be off like a redshank. When will we go, my lamb?”

The Japanese had now become a desirable potion to be swallowed as quickly as possible. But Yasoma persisted:

“Do *you* think I’ve had enough of London, Bridgie?”

“Do I think it!” With huge scorn—“Do I know it! What have you to do with the likes of men that isn’t men and women that isn’t women? God be good to me, sure some of them would make a decent person sick to see

the way they'd be play-acting and not a word of sense coming out of their mouths. 'Tis Mrs. Ascham has the sense, and more power to her! Leave them kicking up their heels like donkeys, and be off!"

Exactly Yasoma's own opinion of her friends, clinched by the two she valued most in all the world; Japan was clearly indicated.

"Well, you may be right for all I know or care, and anyhow I'm tired of London. Look up the boats for Japan and take cabins for the first sailing. That's settled. And now I'm going to bed."

She gave that side of it no more thought, for Bridget was an accomplished courier. Next morning she set forth on her errand and engaged a suite in the Japanese boat in which Ito had secured his passage home. That was a trick of Fate which Yasoma would certainly have averted. The possibility that Ito should imagine she was thrusting her company upon him would have filled her with fury.

Chapter Five

Left alone, Ito brushed Yasoma aside. His own concern was urgent, and hers troubled him little—a disagreeable fancy better forgotten. Eleanor too saw plainly that the moment was not yet and welcomed a diversion. He drew his chair a shade nearer as if in the urgency of confidence.

“Arima has cabled to me to come as soon as possible. Men are pouring in, and he sees great possibilities. Disciplined training without any monastic life to follow attracts them.”

“I understand that. The idea of the young knight watching his armor in the chapel before the fight. We had that once,” she said.

“That was beautiful. Arima means that. Nothing could be more practical, but what is so practical as beauty?”

“Then you should be very practical in Japan; look at the unspeakable loveliness with which you surround religion, for one thing—whereas here it has been mixed up with all the ugliness possible. And when you add the teaching to that! Think of the appalling Anglican catechism, and contrast it with the Five Vows for children in Japan!”

He repeated the words as though they gave him deep pleasure.

“We will be diligent in our duties.

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“We will worship the Buddha and the Kami.

“We will be loyal to the Emperor and our parents.

“We will have merciful hearts.

“We will do everything honestly.”

“Enough for any child and most men,” she said, “though I am not certain of the second. But if ‘worship’ means ‘adore,’ and that means ‘love with delight,’ then every child should worship.”

“They should do nothing else, for they should live in paradise, and to love everything with delight is paradise. If that could be prolonged through life—and we teach that it can, we can create the great race that is to guide and lead mankind.”

“The superman? The very name is tainted. Unhappy voices hang about it.”

“True. But listen. In Zen lies the possibility of creating the race of supermen which Europe dreamed of, but along lines of such folly that the great blond beast of Prussia seemed to be its possible realization. In Japan we have thought of a race in whom the higher consciousness and therefore all psychic power is developed. They will rule the world, not as tyrants but as guides, for we know that in the lowest and most abject of men is the

germ of perfect enlightenment.”

“And if it could be done would the masses submit to be ruled by those who know?”

“How can they refuse? Power is power. And remember it will be the rule of utterly accomplished guidance. It is education which should develop the strength hidden in a child and teach him to manifest it in his actions on the world. I shall never use the word ‘rule’ again.”

“And education—how?”

“In many ways. If we demonstrate our fitness we shall control the schools. We shall disuse the present cramming system and teach 65 a child to know himself and his powers and the Buddhahood or wisdom in him rather than objective facts. There will be the unspoken influence of mighty personality—used as consciously as it is used unconsciously now. But let me be practical first. Let me tell you what is proposed.”

He stopped a moment to choose his words.
She waited with breathless interest when he
began again, his clear dark eyes holding hers.

“May I explain? We have great Zen
monasteries in Japan. Zen stands for science,
art, and social service of the highest type.
Now science—Zen has taught since 500 A.D.
and earlier, that the universe is not matter and
mechanical processes but Thought, and that
absolute knowledge obliterates the idea of
matter. Exactly the result that has come of
Rutherford’s and Einstein’s investigations.
They tell us—‘The stuff of the world is mind-
stuff. Substance has disappeared. We are
convinced of the symbolic character of the
entities of physics. There is nothing else to
liken them to but consciousness.’—And five
hundred years ago a Zen play taught that very
thing in these words:

“‘It is proclaimed that Thought alone
Was, Is, and Shall Be.
As a cloud that veils the moon so matter
 veils
The face of Thought.’

Yes, we have knowledge the scientists are only beginning to realize. And art—Zen made the art of China and Japan. And discipline—we made the samurai spirit and the chivalry of Bushido—the code of our knights. And we can make the supermen who are fit to guide the destinies of the world. Zen will make them in every nation that accepts it. We have done it again and again. We will educate the consciousness to go forward when reason is baffled. Your scientists say now, ‘Something unknown is doing we don’t know what,’ and cry for help from philosophy. We can give it. Our Leader the Buddha knew, and we too are the Instructed. For the meaning of Zen is that a man can behold his own fundamental nature and find the Universe in it. The two consciousnesses are one. And when it is used that is Power.”

66

His eyes glowed on her and struck answering fire. He went on eagerly:

“Look at the unequal development of man—the dreadful powers of science which should be guarded, not put into the hands of the

masses. And believe me—for you know—there are powers as much greater than the late discoveries of science as these are greater than the knowledge of the cave-man—whose consciousness, by the way, still persists and makes use of these weapons daily. That is the danger of the modern world—power exceeds the consciousness which only is fit to guide it.”

“And that way ruin lies,” said Eleanor. “That is true. But what then?”

“The time and the men are here. One of your ablest scientists has just written: ‘In leading us away from the concrete, science is reminding us that our contact with the Real is more varied than was apparent to the ape-mind, to whom the bough that supported him was the beginning and end of reality.’ Well, Asia knew that Reality three millenniums ago and more, though there as well as in the West the ape-mind rules. The streams of science and philosophy are converging, and we are ready. You will see that the Buddha will one day be acknowledged as the greatest

scientific mind of all time and the perfected type of superman in whom science, philosophy, and the highest consciousness are one.”

“And your first practical step is to train men who have the monkish ideal but who can live in the world?”

“Exactly. In Europe your men of science are your true monks. If the West has any religion it is science. But we shall provide men who have trained in science and also in the methods that attained reality on the other line. They will escape the personal and be in touch with the universal. Such men should be able to attract the best Western minds. We have men of different peoples, but all speak and write English, and several like myself speak French and German. We have voices with which to meet Europe.”

67

“With every word you have said I agree. And I know it must come. But why in Japan?”

“Good reasons. . . . You know that Zen has

formed in Japan a band of men who have submitted to a severe discipline much of which appears mere folly and paradox to those who think in the ordinary way.

“There are plenty of the same mind in India and of course in the Buddhist lands. There has been little or no union among these men, and in India, where English influence though it protects all religions is chillingly indifferent, the headway made is very small. In Japan the case is different. It is a Buddhist country, and even where Zen is not understood—and none can understand it who don’t practice it—it is respected. There is good reason why it should be. It founded unconsciously the iron spirit of our samurai to which indeed we owe the whole code of Japanese chivalry. So you see—”

He stopped and looked at Eleanor.

“The last two are certainly not dead,” he added with pride when she was silent. “It is perfectly possible to strengthen the other among men who have done a part of the

discipline and will do more. Such men can't help leading."

"I have no doubt whatever that you can strengthen it," she said, "And who knows how far it may reach? Then Arima sama is making headway?"

68

"Splendid. Yet—please do not speak of any of this nor mention names. We are not ready. I myself have trained for many years. I began when I was eighteen. I need not tell you what I did, for you yourself have done it. You have not told me, but I know."

Eleanor had used that training. She had known from girlhood what it was to live according to a discipline, to practice certain rules of mental training which set aside many indulgences generally thought indispensable. Until a certain point is reached the learner is not permitted to speak of the effort, and though she had reached the point where one is enjoined to make no secret of what can help others to the same development she never alluded to it except when necessity

thrust her along. One does not angle for souls or invest in easy propaganda along the line of the disciplines of Asia; and strangely enough, though she had felt the depths of Ito, his more than Japanese reserve had so darkened the surface of what he wished to hide that even she had not guessed he was an advanced student of these great problems. Her face brightened as she listened, fully understanding all the implications of his words.

“I have worked alone. I wish I could have worked with you,” she said simply. “I should like to meet Arima sama.”

“You have often heard of him?”

“Often, and I long to know him. Will it be allowed when I come out?”

“Certainly. You shall walk in the garden which we call the Garden of Vision.”

She made a gesture of thanks and spoke frankly:

“Perhaps I could even help you by interesting some of the people I meet.”

“That is the very thing I hope,” Ito put 69 in eagerly. “All over the world there are groups. It is in each one we shall find the nucleus of the family of people who will help the evolution of consciousness which is all in all to the race. Pray come out as soon as you can.”

She promised, adding: “And you will write to me. When do you go?”

“As soon as I can. Arima has summoned me. His school is the simplest place—in the pine-woods of Naniwa, near his garden. It will be a stern monastic training—but we are men of the world, not monks, and very militant. Have you noticed in history what immense power the military monks, such as the Knights Templar, had? Well, trained to very different ends—but you can imagine! Arima writes that many are coming—young men, strong, brilliant, and eager, as they flocked to the Buddha long ago. Not that he put it in that

way. You will not misunderstand my allusion.”

She smiled. No need to answer that in words.

“But I know he is a poor man. How has he afforded the necessary shelter?”

“He has built a big wooden building with his own hands and those of his men on a piece of woodland which belonged to his ancestors. The wood came from the forest. I have the picture. Look!”

He opened his pocketbook and showed a photograph of a large and beautiful wooden building, following, though roughly, the usual curved lines of the roofs of the Buddhist temples of Japan. Only the necessary space had been cleared for it among the great cryptomeria trees, and those cut down had been used in the building, after seasoning in sun and rain. Their faithful columns supported it, and around their stern dedication waved and whispered their living brethren, holding their part in the work after a noble

fashion. About the place and the building they brought the awe of age and tradition and great deeds seen and remembered, and the silence and dimness which befit deep meditation and aid the spiritual calm which is the harvest of the spiritual struggle. A mountain stream ran past the little entry. A ray of sunlight had caught it and made it brilliant—a living crystal—and Eleanor laying her finger upon it said:

“Does that stream run through the garden of Arima sama?” and Ito answered, “Yes.”

The picture moved her deeply. All the passion for beauty which burns, a still white flame imperishable as jade, in the coldest Japanese heart had inspired the choice of the place for the building and its own austere loveliness. She who knew Japan knew how the sun would shoot his golden arrows at dawn and sunset through the pillared pines. At his zenith there would be shadow—a mystic dusk. Even his strength could not directly pierce the deep green shade and long aisles. Moon and stars would drift above it—

sailing the blue seas of midnight—and the Eternal Voice of the water rehearse the transience of life. Always there would be calm—calm reechoed in quiet voices or the silence within. Japan had built her soul as well as her loveliness into the faithful lines of that building, and as it had spoken in the past, so it would renew its strength and speak again.

“Of course there are no fees,” Ito said presently, “and each man provides his own food by his work, whatever that may be. The monastery of Naniwa is only a few miles distant. Some of the men will be students there also. Men stay as long or as short a time as they choose.”

“Are any of them well-known men?”

“Several. Among the students are Shimidzu, the great artist, and Watanabe, the well-known bacteriologist, and many more. We shall not lack for good talk in the evenings, when the pines are waking in the starlight.”

Happiness glowed in his face like the uprush of dawn. She felt that she had never known the man before—had never gaged his control and magnificent self-possession. When Japan undertakes a thing she does it. She has the dynamic power of the West and the introspection of the East—and more. To Eleanor the very picture was the fulfilment of a hope. She caught his gladness like inspiration, and each fanned the other's fire of understanding.

They had talked for an hour more before she remembered Yasoma, and with the thought came a chill. She had hoped for Arima's help for a very stumbling and misdirected strength—yet one in which she herself most purely and truly believed. But she had pictured him in meditative leisure in his Garden of Vision, ready to guide and pity. What hope for Yasoma now in this calm energy of scientific men banding themselves in a common purpose, and above all against the prejudice she had inspired in Ito? Love alone could understand the girl and realize the hardships of her life, and though Eleanor loved and

understood, how was a man, foreign by training to all that could plead for her, to grasp her need? It was with wisest care and more than care that she began her approach.

“You have told me your hope, and it has gladdened my very heart. May I tell you one of mine?”

A pause. He looked straight at her.

“You know my friend, Yasoma Brandon.” She could not miss the darkening of his face as courtesy took the place of living interest. “I have told you she is going to Japan. Now I will tell you why. Suddenly, as it seems—but not to me for I have seen she was outgrowing her life here—a kind of loathing of it all has seized her. An uncertain feeling. . . . I dare not myself guess how far either revulsion or its reaction will carry her. But I think the shell is breaking that the bird may fly. Do you remember Matthew Arnold?

72

“‘On that hard Roman world distaste
And secret loathing fell—’

Well, that seems to be her case. I imagine it happens more often than we guess. And I begged her to break with her surroundings for a time. To go abroad. You heard that and you suggested India because you did not want her to go to Japan. I understood your feeling perfectly well. But that would not do. She is rich. She knows all the rich people who travel. She would inevitably be swept into the rhythm of her old life again, and then how could she struggle free? So I said she must go far away among people who have no remotest connection with her world and to whom her advantages of money and beauty will mean nothing and—”

“Do you call Miss Brandon beautiful?” he asked in candid astonishment. “I have never thought that. I can’t analyze her face, but her expression and manner repel me. Forgive me—you are her friend. I apologize deeply.”

“No need. The beauty of Beauty is that it is a shifting quality depending on ourselves. But, aside from that, I think she is at the parting of the ways, and inspiration now—I hoped that

Arima sama would perhaps say—perhaps would prompt her to see for herself—” She hesitated.

“No—no, impossible. Surely you will see that. . . . It would always have been difficult and is impossible now. Japan is not England, and women—”

“And India is not England, and yet that question was settled two thousand five hundred years ago when Ananda asked the Buddha whether women also had not as great a need and as great a right as men to the best in the world of spiritual discipline. You know the answer.”

73

“I know,” he answered obstinately, “but that was on condition they would accept a bitterly hard discipline.”

“And have you any right to be certain that she would refuse? Have you the heart to take the best for yourself and leave nothing for her? That is not what I have thought of you. The truth is that you think of her as one of the

women of whom your friend gave so detestably true a picture. These women abound, but there are others and she is one of them.”

He looked at her and away and answered with sarcasm: “You scarcely want to make me believe she is one of the calm noble-minded women of whom my friend says there are not enough to leaven the Western materialism?”

She took him up with spirit. “Quite certainly not. Though she is just twenty-four she is still entirely undeveloped. But she *will* develop. And though she has lived in about as vulgar and worthless a world as exists she has pride and love of the beautiful enough to have kept her from all its worst imbecilities. I could swear to that. Is it nothing that she has wearied of it? As for courage and willingness to fling herself after anything fine with a kind of reckless joy and beauty, I can answer for that too. You shall not undervalue my friend.”

Itō looked unconvinced. “Need we discuss

her?” he said uncomfortably. “I wish I could agree—I have always agreed with you. But, no.”

“You are utterly unjust,” she said with a touch of anger.

They had never spoken to each other in this tone before. For a moment it was as if a gulf had opened between them and a cold wind blew across it. Then Eleanor stretched out her hand. 74

“I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have spoken like that. Forgive me. I’ll say no more.”

But Ito was shaken and pale. His conscience was astir.

“I am brutal. You are right. Say what you will. I will tell Arima—I promise that. I can do nothing, but he will know what is right. I should not hesitate. Do not take your regard from me.”

They clasped hands silently, and presently he

went away, saddened and quiet and very greatly perplexed. In the stern Japanese code no woman could be accepted for teaching in such circumstances, and this woman of all. . . . It is not too much to say that he had a kind of horror of Yasoma. Not only was the freedom she allowed herself just what he must misinterpret, but many people in London had shown forth her character before him decorated in all the hues most revolting to his mind. Always, in the last resort, there is national misunderstanding in every question where women are concerned, for the treasure of the race must be guarded by each according to the best that is in it, and on the rock of the best mutual understanding shipwrecks easily. Eleanor might perhaps form some idea of what Yasoma must seem to a man trained in the sternest traditions of Asiatic good breeding and reserve, but even she not wholly, and Yasoma herself not at all.

All she could hear from Eleanor later was that there would probably be an opportunity of meeting Arima. Perhaps it would be better to delay a little before leaving England.

“Now or never!” said Yasoma with set lips, suspecting where the doubt and unwillingness lay, and with her own secret burning in her heart. “I go within a fortnight or not at all. But one precaution I did take. I got the passenger list of the Kagoshima Maru on which I first took passage for I was in mortal terror lest I should find myself in Ito’s boat. His name was on it, so I changed to this boat. I wouldn’t have sailed with him for anything you could give me! He’d think I had hunted him down. The only man in the world who would think it! But he would. Well—I’m going, Eleanor, and I think you’re sending me on a wild-goose chase, and still I’ll go! I’m through with London though perhaps I may yearn for it when I’m in a strange land. I do believe that seeing things may give me some sort of sense of direction, and I haven’t an atom of it at the moment. But come out before long! It’s a lonesome adventure, and I know no more what I’m going to look for than the Man in the Moon. . . . Ito has gone, hasn’t he?” she added suspiciously.

“He said good-by a week ago. I think he was going to Paris.”

No more was said of him. Eleanor knew when to be silent. There were many talks between the two before the day of parting came. They were together constantly, and Yasoma almost lived at the flat. Yet if Eleanor had known the truth of those last days in London she would have made even greater efforts. It is not too much to say that the girl went through hell. She had sworn Bridget to secrecy about her plans and had talked among her friends of running over to Paris for shopping. “And I may go to Cannes for a week or two. The Morays are there.”

Not a word more, but even that threw Maxwell into alarm when it reached him. He wrote to her daily; he came to the house until he saw that was hopeless. He telephoned; he haunted every place where it was possible they might meet; and all in vain. She had suddenly blotted herself out of his life, and the very thing which he could have sworn would make them

necessary to each other had been a sword of division. It startled him, but he by no means despaired. She was unlike other women. She would take things in her own haughty reckless way, but most assuredly she would relent when satisfied pride justified yielding. He believed too that she had fixed her mind on marriage as the only possible relation between them and might be holding off until it became possible. He leaped at that notion. Better say nothing yet, better be very careful lest some frantic jealousy of his wife's might injure Yasoma publicly. She would never forgive that, he knew. He could not dare to speak of all his plans. Yasoma herself might say or do something rash. He would run down to Cannes while she was there and talk it over secretly.

Eleanor little guessed what was driving Yasoma into the abnormal state of nervous irritability and craving to be gone which she noted daily. She began to be certain that something strange and sudden must have uprooted her from London, but her guesses never remotely touched the truth. In spite of

all her follies there was a reckless pride and purity about her which denied any such conjecture. Eleanor's belief was Yasoma's sword and shield. It saved some self-respect to cover her self-loathing, helped her to endure Maxwell's persecution with dogged obstinacy. To him she never answered a word. Never vouchsafed a look. She would put it behind her and forget it—destroy it.

So preparations went on, and the person who felt most pleasure in the wild-goose chase, as Yasoma persisted in calling it, was Bridget. Oddly enough she connected the idea with that of a pilgrimage. Through a heathen land naturally, and the Interpreter would counsel them, and Mr. Greatheart guard them, and the peace of God blossom for Yasoma on the far mountains of the Unknown Country.

77

“For indeed it isn't likely she'd be let go so far and get nothing at all for it, the darling!” she said to Eleanor one day. “There was never a one went on a pilgrimage that he didn't get something for his pains even if he

fell down and died before he made good. Sure that's well known! And I have my own prayer I'll put up for her, and you'll see, ma'am, she'll get the full of her two hands of it. And though 'tis far to go there's those here that I'm glad to see the seams of their stockings, for they have my child led into every kind of nonsense and if they didn't leave their mark on her 'tis no thanks to them, but that she held her head too high for the likes of such trash!"

Eleanor agreed, but neither she nor Bridget realized what efforts were made to hold Yasoma back nor what a struggle she endured to break her chain. In addition, she was really almost in a panic about Japan. In moments of doubt she pulled against herself and it was only Eleanor who could say, "Steady on!"—and hold her to it when her thoughts flickered about America or Canada or any nearer refuge.

The day came, and Eleanor motored down with her to the docks, following Bridget and the baggage. Both were silent, and as they sat

hand in hand Eleanor felt a little quiver in the grasp now and then and realized the courage it implied. “If I knew what I was going for!” was the wistful cry. But still she held on and would have none of the ordinary introductions showered upon her.

“If I took them I might use them,” she said to Eleanor. “You never know. I might find myself going clean mad and then I might throw it all up. But if I know no one I can’t. Come out soon or you may only have to gather up the fragments. I can’t think what will become of me.”

78

They went on board together, received by bowing stewards and stewardesses. Bridget was making the suite beautiful with flowers, and all was the perfection of comfort. Books were piled in readiness, the latest magazines and papers lent color to the table in the sitting-room. Bridget’s cabin was next door.

“It really is delightful—the charmingest place!” said Yasoma more hopefully. “I begin to think I shall like the voyage. And I can

always jump overboard at Hong Kong or commit suicide before Kobe. Let's sit here till you must go ashore."

They sat while Eleanor rehearsed the kindness and grace of the people who would receive her, and Yasoma listened with dropped black lashes. She wanted passionately at that moment to run ashore and flee swiftly to the shuttered undraped house. But personal cowardice had never been her fault, and she could swallow her medicine.

A boy at the door, gasping, a boy with a cable and a letter—the son of the caretaker.

"My mother she put me in a taxi, miss, and she ses, ses she, 'Just you get down to the docks like a streak of greased lightning and maybe you'll catch the boat'—and I done it!"

Yasoma snatched the cable, then handed it to Eleanor. She had hidden the letter at once.

"Glad to assist. Can arrange for you at Naniwa.

Signed—ARIMA.”

They looked at each other.

“I *am* glad,” said Eleanor. “That was kind. Now you have a center, and I hear it’s the loveliest place. I’m at rest about you.”

Yasoma’s eyes hardened into steel:

79

“That’s true, but I may as well say at once that I don’t want to owe anything to Ito. He hates me. He despises me. If he were to be anywhere that’s the place I would keep out of. If he’s to be at Naniwa, I’m not.”

Eleanor thought it better to say as little about Ito as possible and leave the meeting at Naniwa to fate.

“Why reject any kindness?” she asked. “I tell you frankly, Yasoma, that I think Ito a very remarkable man. He has gifts that you, and more than you, will recognize one of these days, and I wish you understood him better.”

“Done’s done,” Yasoma said mischievously,

“and now I’ll tell you—if I thought he was on board this boat or if he joined it anywhere I’d get straight out and come home. So that just shows! We should be cuts a week after sailing. But all the same I *do* think it’s kind of Arima, and it’ll be a new experience. Imagine Bridgie with Japanese maids! The poor pilgrim!”

“They’ll love her in a week. And now—let us talk of happy things. The shore gong will go soon.”

They talked of happy things, yet in spite of themselves when the bell rang Yasoma clung to Eleanor.

“I think you’re the only friend I have in the world,” she said, the words wrung out of her reticence by loss. “The others—Oh, Eleanor, don’t forget me! Write—and come.”

She promised both, her eyes not dry. Yasoma might be a very easy person to censure, but she was also a terribly easy person to love. Her last vision of her was standing in the

sitting-room with a haunting look of grief and fear. Eleanor felt not unlike an executioner as she went on deck leaving the prisoner behind.

To her profound amazement as she passed the wide saloon door she saw Ito standing within it talking to an officer. Ito—whom she believed to be speeding down the Mediterranean! She halted a second in much discomfort, intending to run back and warn Yasoma to be prepared with her best behavior. And then the comedy of the situation seized her. She knew in a flash that Ito had had the same inspiration as Yasoma. He had seen her name in the other passenger list and had hurriedly transferred to the next boat. The comic Muse, who is so out of place among her celestial sisters, had certainly taken a hand in affairs on this occasion. She had a mischievous moment of thinking she would like unseen to behold the meeting and the mutual flash of wrath, but it was succeeded by real anxiety. Suppose it should wreck the whole business! Suppose the first available train from Marseille should bring the returning prodigal?

There was nothing to be done, and she ran down the gangway and stood watching as the ship backed water. A handkerchief fluttered from Yasoma's window, and Bridget had run up to wave from the wide and sheltered deck.

Eleanor was conscious then of acute dismay and alarm. She could only hope that both would see the humor of the situation and relax into laughter. Yasoma might. She doubted Ito.

The great boat made slowly for the shining seas. Eleanor went back to write and protest her innocence.

Yasoma stood alone in her cabin reading a letter.

“They tell me you are going to Cannes, darling, and there I swear I will see you. You can't keep me away. I'm no good for business or pleasure or anything without you. We have got to settle it. I have a tremendous plan to propose. Don't be cruel—I know it means nothing but

don't drive me dotty, or I don't know myself what I may do.”

In bitter anger she tore it into little bits and scattered it on the breeze that was blowing out to sea.

Chapter Six

A letter from Marseille:

“My dear Eleanor:

“But if you knew and didn’t tell me it’s just as well the length of France is between us. The first person I saw when I went into the saloon was Ito, and honestly, in spite of my fury, I had to laugh when I saw his face. I assure you there was nothing flattering and I knew he would have bolted if he could. So I just walked up to him and said coolly—‘I hadn’t the least notion when you were going and since we quarrel whenever we meet and there’s no room for skirmishing in a boat I took the trouble to look over the passenger list of the

Kagoshima Maru and to change to this boat when I saw your name. Could I do more?’ I saw by the caught look in his face that he had done exactly the same, and my very toes were twitching with laughter. Mercifully it was only my toes!

“With his awful politeness—perfectly frozen!—he said that if his company was so disagreeable to me he would change at Marseille, and I saw that in his Japanese way he felt himself a kind of host on board one of their own boats and really would bolt unless I were careful. And that would have been simply awful for the next doesn’t go for a fortnight. Indeed if he had jumped overboard to oblige me I shouldn’t have been surprised—he looked so truly horrified. So I did my best. I said, ‘We needn’t meet more than you like. We need only bow and open our books, and the six weeks will go like a dream.’ And so we parted, and for the first two days that was exactly what happened.

“There is a nice library, and I made a

palisade of books and tried not to look up when he passed talking melodious Japanese with one man after another. Oh, how I envied him and cursed my parents for not grounding me in Japanese from the cradle! Everyone was polite and smiling and interested—and I couldn't say a word and was utterly at a disadvantage. So wholesome for me! I know you foresaw and planned that I should feel myself an unlettered oaf, and I did and took the full good of it. There were a few English—but of the cocktaily rowdy sort—and on their advances I turned a glassy eye. I could not stand the bland and brazen intolerance with which they regarded the presence of the Japanese on board their own ship, and if I would have let myself talk it would only have been to tell them luxuriously what I thought of them. So Bridgie and I sat alone. For the hundredth time of reading she has reached the Valley of Humiliation in 'Pilgrim's Progress,' and as she read it aloud with appropriate comments, as she has done since I was six, I really felt it very suitable to the occasion.

“Dear Eleanor, I had serious thoughts of retracing my steps from Marseille until the thought occurred that his pride of courtesy might be so wounded that he might commit *hara-kiri* on the spot (but now I find they call it *seppuku*), and then you would refuse to receive the murderess. But hear the end or rather the beginning. Four days out, seeing me sitting alone with Bridgie in a placid sleep beside me, he came up and bowed with the most appalling seriousness and said these memorable words:

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“Miss Brandon, I desire to apologize for all my past rudeness and to beg you to forgive me. When I think that you have trusted yourself to a Japanese boat and I, a Japanese man, have treated you with coldness and neglect I am indeed very sorry and humiliated. And when I think also that you are Mrs. Ascham’s friend, whom I love [he did not mean he loved me, Eleanor dear; that uncertainty is the fault of the English language], I believe I am past forgiveness and yet cannot be at peace

unless I am forgiven.’

“Bridgie punctuated this discourse with soft little snores, and it was all inexpressibly comic and touching because he was so dreadfully in earnest. Now what do you think I did? Not even you will guess, so you have to be told. I was so lonely and miserable that at a kind word the tears came into my eyes and brimmed over. As Bridgie says—‘it came so unexpected-like’ that I could have killed myself. He looked perfectly horrified. I saw his hand make a wild motion for his handkerchief while I dashed at mine. Then he sped away and came back with a glass of wine, which I had to taste because he was so kind.

“‘If I have caused this—’ he said, hovering round me in an agony—And to shorten a long story I said I too was sorry and ashamed, and couldn’t we make friends in your holy name? He snatched at this. He sat down and began to talk in the most delightful way about Japan at large—the

art treasures at Kyoto and Nara; everything you can think of—for an hour. If we had always been what Bridget calls ‘bosomers’ he could not have been kinder. Then he collected every Japanese in the boat who could speak English, French, or 85 German, and there were many, and ranged in a bowing queue, he introduced them one by one. Finally he pounced on two lovely little Japanese ladies who were emerging from their cabins and introduced them as his elder sister the widow of Arima’s brother and her daughter Sayoko. He begged them to teach me the most polite forms of Japanese, so that I might be able to speak when we arrive, and in the prettiest timidest English they promised. His sister looks old enough to be his mother, and her daughter has been some years at school in England.

“Wasn’t this coals of fire? Didn’t I blush over the whole expanse of my body? Seriously, I was ashamed of myself and plunged heart and soul into the fray, and now I sit surrounded by eager kindly

people all trying to teach me their delightful language, and even Bridgie has learned to say good morning and good night in Japanese. I am so much happier and more confident. If there were nothing more than this in Japan it will be a delightful change with all the beauty I know is there. And I will own up that I think you were right about Ito and I was wrong. I don't think him conceited any more, nor unduly proud of his race. I think he is a manly man with a great deal more than I suspected in him. I have not yet dared to talk of Naniwa and Arima, but I shall make a cautious venture soon.

“I invited him and a Mr. Kuroda, who is a distinguished poet and literary man, to come ashore with Bridgie and me here, and we lunched at the Hotel du Louvre. They don't know the place and they enjoyed it. And then I took them for a drive along the Corniche, and they were half shocked, half delighted, to see how handy I was with the car. But it all cemented our friendship.

“I must finish now, for this must be posted,
and all I will say is that I love you, 86
and I begin to see why you may have
been the divinity that shapes my ends. I
don’t know yet if they will stand shaping,
but *you* may! Anyhow I shall like the
people, and Bridgie says that if they
weren’t heathens they would be the best of
good Christians. I see the notion growing
in her mind that Ito is to be the Mr.
Greatheart of our expedition and devour all
the dragons and Apollyons. Who would
have thought it! Nothing less than my tears
would have wrought the miracle, and I
can’t imagine why I cried. It generally
takes a Moses to wring water from my
rock, but on this occasion a look did it.
Gott bewahre!

Your loving SOMA.”

“P. S. I believe Sayoko’s name means
‘Twilight.’ Don’t you like that?”

A letter from Ito lay beside this—brief and to
the point.

“My dear Mrs. Ascham:

“I must confess myself to you, for I cannot deserve your friendship—perhaps you will never think me worthy of it again. I was angry when I found Miss Brandon was a passenger. I had the unworthy thought that she might have planned it for a practical joke to annoy me. I then resolved I would not speak. I was deeply wounded. I said to myself—‘There are English on board. Let her speak to them.’ Presently I saw she would not. They were not of the samurai type. But still I would not relent. Day after day I saw her sit alone, and at last Kuroda said to me. ‘On board this ship we are hosts. Indeed it is a shame!’ And then something struck fire in my heart, and I went and asked her pardon as I now humbly ask yours. What was my deepened shame when the tears fell from her eyes for loneliness—she who had so many friends! If it had been blood I could not have more known the wound I had made—and to a young girl. Since then I beg you to believe I have done what I

could, and it is the more reproach that she has accepted so graciously and has done all in her power to make me know forgiveness. All my people on board think her a most beautiful and graceful lady.

“They crowd to speak with her and to teach her Japanese, and my sister and niece, Mrs. Arima and her daughter, are much with her and consider her to be a beautiful princess. How could it be otherwise with your friend? How blind I have been, and how punished! Now I beg you to believe she will be taken all our care of as if she were a piece of delicate porcelain given by a queen.

“We do not speak yet of Naniwa, but that will come, and I shall tell Arima how young she is and kind, and he will give his best as we shall all. The old lady with her is a good Buddhist of the simple sort though she does not know it at all.

“I prostrate myself before you to ask forgiveness and to express my gratitude

which will last through all my rebirths for the goodness you have invariably shown your friend and servant who begs you would command him to all you desire and thus confer a favor.

YASUJIRO ITO.”

Both letters moved Eleanor. In both she could read between the lines—the stirrings of two generous hearts. For much she could trust Yasoma’s charm, but it would be the rebound of past cruelty of thought in both which would draw them together now, each eager to make reparation. She hoped for a true and lasting friendship and had no fear of anything warmer and more dangerous. Not only 88 was there a racial bar, but she had learned in those last few days to understand fully that Ito was as dedicated to his work as any Galahad. No floating beauty would obscure the enchantment of the vision which every stream of heredity and training had made the heart of his heart. That was safe. All was safe now. She would wait eagerly for the next letters from Naples. They came.

“Dear and kind Eleanor:

“I have had your letters. We lie in the blue bay with Vesuvius puffing a very tiny cigarette—no more—as he drowns in sunshine, and I write after a visit to Pompeii. Do you remember the day you and I went? Well—we made up a party, Mr. Ito and I. Bridgie came to weep over the tragic end of idolaters who ‘said their prayers to their old goddesses and the like that wouldn’t wag a finger to save them at a pinch,’ and Mr. Kuroda and the little Japanese ladies came too, and a man named Yamashima, who is a most fascinating artist—the loveliest brushwork. It was a brilliant day, and Ito told us a story of an earthquake and volcano business in Southern Japan that gave me a feeling of the heroism of the poor Japanese people that stirs me yet. But one touch I want to tell you. Do you remember when we went, you and I, and the guide beckoned the Englishmen of the party mysteriously into the house—the lupanar—which women may not see? Do you remember how we

loathed the seriousness with which they all marched stiffly in with really a pious church-going air upon them, and you and I walked on and hated them for going when we were there. It seemed an insult to all women.

“Well, the guide was ready today. I saw the hateful little twinkle in his eye, anticipating his very especial tip. The three 89 Japanese men took no notice. He was a buzzing fly. ‘You do not know, zhentilmen. You do not understand!’—exactly like the guide in ‘Innocents Abroad.’ Ito waved him off sternly, and the others followed suit, and all came on serenely with us to the house of the baker and the sad petrified loaves that no one will eat forever. Now I don’t exalt the Japanese above Englishmen—I don’t know enough yet to judge. But I do say that was an excellent point of good manners, and I do say that the English attitude was revolting. If they wanted to see the filth—and no doubt they did—they should have stolen back after we had finished the round.

Those things should be done as sneakingly as they are sneaking.

“Another thing. I was struck with the Japanese comments. The little ladies—they are quite at home with me now—looked with such pity at the poor lava-covered figures of the dead people who were once so gay. And the dog—do you remember the dog? I know you do—I know what you said. Well, little Sayoko said gently, ‘They shouldn’t show them. It is too cruel that all the world should stare.’ And Mrs. Arima laid a rose beside the woman, quietly, and went quickly on. Yes—I am beginning to know a new and very wonderful people, beautifully mannered, reserved yet tender-hearted. Shall I like them as well when I know better? No doubt there are snags ahead. I can always be trusted to provide them when they don’t exist naturally.

“Last night Ito told me of Arima’s garden. He only described it outwardly, and it must be enchanting, but under all he said there was a cold fine stream of something awe-

striking. I felt it—I felt we were nearing something lovely, but perhaps terrible too. But I dared not ask, for with him things come in their right order. One must wait. He ended with an odd saying: ‘I have heard from Mrs. Ascham that you are an expert in judō. That will help you very much—and us.’ But you shouldn’t have said my pawings are expert, Eleanor! What will he say when he sees? And I want to shine in his eyes. Badly, I want it!

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“I said I knew a little and he then said that Sayoko is very good at it and I should practice with her. She has promised most kindly. I wonder which of us knows most! They used to say I was decent at it, you know.”

There was more, very personal to Eleanor, which need not be told. In every word she felt Yasoma nearer to her, felt a healthiness, the pulsing of upward-running sap. She had not been mistaken. This was the way—the road to Arima’s garden.

A long letter came from Ito at the same time, written during two or three days, eager and vibrant with hope of the things to be accomplished at Naniwa. At the end, speaking of Yasoma, he said:

“More and more do I realize my mistake about her. She has the courage of a samurai—you told me that and I did not believe—and is most quick to remark and rejoice in the fine things which stir the blood. My two ladies say she is gentle and kind in all she does, and they much respect her affection for her servant who is a good woman. This we take for the mark of a great lady who can value fidelity. I am truly glad she came. What I can do will be done.

“More and more do I wish you to know Arima. His teaching is no schoolmaster’s work. It is the art of flinging a man into the receptive condition where he catches the fire of wisdom from the universe as a match strikes on a box. A homely symbol. But the flame is engendered. He has all the *brusquerie* of the great Zen masters and uses

it to startle, offend, shock men out of the groove of ordinary thinking. I never knew a man so completely at one with nature and animals. He calls them The Gate of Ascending Consciousness, and conveys wisdom through them as the Buddha did through the flower he held in his hand when he smiled on the greatest of his disciples and thus bestowed absolute knowledge. Art grows at Naniwa like a flower of the moors. If Miss Brandon has eyes to see, and I think she has, delight is in store for her.”

Again Eleanor rejoiced for Yasoma. For herself also. Not only was that adventure beginning in hope instead of doubt but Arima's project at Naniwa was steadily building itself into assurance. Ten more men had joined, and Arima himself was full of restrained hope and inspiration. All was to be modeled on the Zen monasteries of Japan, with hours set apart for teaching, study, meditation, concentration, and work in the fields which would provide their food. It was good rice-growing land, and they did not lack for water, for besides the stream in Arima's

garden there was a river famed for its rapids lower down, into which the garden stream ran and lost itself. One of the men had learned printing, and there was a printing outfit which would be useful for pamphlets and such small books. There was much more, and it strengthened her purpose to go and see for herself and her hope for Yasoma. Very eagerly she awaited the letters from Port Said:

“Dearest Eleanor:

“All goes well, but I have had a snub to my pride which I don’t like telling. Sayoko and I met in war, otherwise known as jujutsu, soon after leaving Naples. We were swinging down the Mediterranean on a lovely blue breeze, with tiny waves tipped with flying foam, when she came and bowed and said, ‘Honorable conflict?’ In half an hour we were both in our gym kit and in my sitting-room where Mrs. Arima and Bridgie sat as umpires. You know Bridgie relishes it. I think she considers it a kind of physical preparation

for meeting Apollyon when he stops the highway, and she was with me once when we were crossing a field near Abingdon when a young half-drunk farm laborer tried to frighten us and I gave him what for to his utter consternation.

“I shall never forget the pride of the moment when he came at me like a bull and expected to see me bolt or faint. ‘Aha, my friend,’ I thought, ‘this is a case for science!’—and it was. He literally bellowed as I sent him flying with a sprained wrist. He came on again, and I added a sprained knee to the outfit and told his master to send for him. Well—I know too much to flatter myself I could make hay of Sayoko. She is smaller than I, much more delicately built, little hands like leaves, sweet little egg-shaped face, and great eyes with that lovely Japanese rounding of the angle which gives such liquid depth to the look, and I could have picked her up and carried her off, *if I could!* But not a bit of it! We bowed deeply to each other—you know the

etiquette—and then we advanced warily.

“I scored at first. I knew more than she allowed for and that put her on her mettle, and presently she began to puzzle me. I made a silly charge. She met it with a turn of the knee and I was down in a minute. You should have seen her apologizing for her superior knowledge—the dearest little soul! I really think she welcomed it when I got her once. But it was only once, and I think something outside caught her attention for a second, for she is really much the better man. But such a sport! She taught me a new lock that very day. 93 A wonderful one. I could guard you round the world with it and now I am nearly as good at it as she. Each day I learn something new, and she says that down the Red Sea I shall match her and really ought to try with one of the men if they would not be too polite to do their best. She spread my fame over the ship, and everyone is awfully interested, especially Ito.

“I was never so happy in my life as I am here. All the Japanese have made me feel one of them, and as there are very few who don’t speak one of the European languages we are in communication all the time. And furthermore let me tell you—we have two hours every evening after dinner when Sayoko and her mother and some of the men insist on teaching me Japanese, and I am beginning to learn a bit. The ship accepts this as a kind of game. Even the stewards when they bring me anything point to it with merry eyes and say the Japanese name for it before they set it down. Then I repeat it, and there are laughter and bows and as much delight as if I were a good child. I can even eat elegantly with *hashi*—chopsticks—now. I love being here. I am learning things all day long, and they like to teach me.”

There was an addition two days later:

“Two men did consent to meet us at jujutsu. One was Ito, the other a cousin of Sayoko’s. Only two or three lookers-on

were allowed, and a place hung round with flags on deck. I shouldn't have minded publicity myself, but I saw they thought this right. Well, it was a great time and I felt sort of inspired. Sayoko got me twice, but I got her once. She beat her cousin, and then Ito sent her flying, but so beautifully that she was not hurt. And then he tried me. Of course he was only playing, though you could not see how. But he is simply magnificent. The instructor in London is nothing to him. He is gentle, so courteous, that you think nothing can possibly happen, and in a moment it is over and you are done. Oh, if I had known this when I was being so rude to him in London! Ass that I was; double-distilled ass! But so kind! He took great pains to show me his locks and grips and sleights, and I learned more than I ever have before in my life. He let me throw him several times for practice and he will take on Sayoko and me every day. It makes you feel so strong and wise and splendid. There is nothing like it—nothing, and I feel—how shall I say?—as if there were so much

more beneath it than one can know yet. A whole philosophy of life.

“You will understand, for you know that all the time one is conquering the enemy by his own strength and not by yours. It is wisdom that wins against the brute force. I begin to realize the truth of what you told me about the man who invented one great school of it—how he noticed that the weight of snow broke the great pine-boughs, but slipped off the pliant willows. I am hunting something elusive in my thoughts about it, and Ito smiles and says I shall know one day. He says that Arima is the greatest master of judo in Japan. I long to meet him if for that only. But there will be more. I see—and don’t know how I see—that I am going into Wonderland.

“Well, then we stopped, and two more men came in, and none could beat Ito. He is simply superb and never a fussy look—only intent and quiet. But always the master. When I said so, he said: ‘But I am nothing to Arima. You shall see that he can

teach you things I have not yet learned. What will you say if he orders you to go through the ordeal of choking—strangling? It is not done to women, but if you prove yourself a great soul he will perhaps say you should.’ You had told me of that 95 strange thing and how they revive you in some mysterious way. So I said I would think it an honor if Arima thought I could stand it. I would not be a bit afraid, any more than of taking the big jumps out hunting. But I begin to think—No, I won’t tell you that yet. You always say it’s better not to talk about a thing until one’s mind is settled. I can tell you Sayoko is a very unusual girl—very different from the London specimen. She is strong and courageous in mind. I can fancy heroic things for her and I know she is a bit of a—shall I say mystic? For she too talks of Arima’s garden though she has never seen it. What is there about that place? What do they mean? They will not tell me yet. And tonight Sayoko said:

“My mother loves me very much. If I ask

she cannot deny. I have said let us come to Naniwa for a while near my uncle. Let us make a garden there. Better than Tokyo. I wish this very much, and she has said yes.' So they are going. Is it a place of gardens? I don't know, but already it draws me. I discovered today from Kuroda that Arima is a seventh-grade man in jujutsu, and there are only four seventh-grade men living. Neither Ito nor the Arimas would ever have told me this. Also Kuroda told me that Ito has given all he has to Arima's work. I like strength, don't you?"

By that mail Ito did not write, but Eleanor read Yasoma's letter with delight. It was like watching the healthy growth of a plant unconscious of its growth and the lovelier. She understood, if Yasoma did not, that the Arimas were going to Naniwa because in that way a door could be opened for Yasoma which must have been closed otherwise. But she would not speak of it. That would be to interfere with Ito's silent guidance. Who could have foreseen his wisdom and goodness? "But I may thank him one

day,” thought Eleanor.

Her thoughts turned to Bridget. She would have liked to know that her heart was at rest about her child. But Bridget was no writer. As a matter of fact, she was perfectly happy about Yasoma.

To her simple faithful thinking it was as though burning had ceased and a great coolness set in. All day she could watch, and it seemed that all the girl's interests and amusements were simple and healthy as when she was fourteen. Early in the morning she would be marching round the deck, with Sayoko imitating the longer Western step as best she could. There were swimming and jujutsu and long talks with Ito and other men who clustered about her. There was fencing! She had always excelled there, and she won applause from those who were themselves experts. True, the English exalted their noses in air and closed their little circle firmly against Asiatic contamination and the still worse pollution of Europeans who countenanced Asiatic existence. But that

struck no dismay into Bridget's soul, and Yasoma was unconscious of them. Bridget appreciated also the courtesy of the Japanese.

“They keep themselves to themselves when they should and that's better than to be pawing and belittling yourself!” she reflected. “'Tis as good as a picture to watch them speaking so graceful for all they're so queer-looking.”—And then to Yasoma:

“Now, let you take pattern by them, my lamb, and don't be so free and easy when we get back! 'Twould make a blind woman mad to see the way them Englishmen would take your hand and stare in your eyes like little lords that'd have the right to have their own way with you.”

Yasoma mocked, but in her own heart knew that the Japanese social training was not undesirable. It set a standard whatever their private lives might be (and she had read too much to search Asia for Galahads). Certainly this distance was better and recommended itself to her for reasons she

could not yet decipher clearly.

And the days went like a dream. She got out her Japanese grammar, which had seemed so hopeless, and lo! the laughing teaching of her new friends had taken the initial steps for her, and with her great natural aptitude for languages she went ahead full speed. Two hours every day for that study with Ito and the Arimas for masters, and others looking on, suggesting, correcting mispronunciation—it was no wonder she pulled more than her own weight in their company. Could she forget the triumph of the moonlit evening before leaving the Red Sea when Ito set her the task of reading aloud some Japanese poems from his English handwriting to a chosen audience? The meaning had been carefully explained. Pronunciation had been drilled into her, and what was their delight when she did not read but recited the verses with grace and precision. It was a joyous triumph for all the attendant teachers, and radiance shone through even Ito's gravity. Indeed she was the spoiled child of the ship.

“You have the gift that people shall love you,” said Sayoko, and it struck Yasoma with fresh pleasure. She wished the voyage would never end, yet longed for the things beyond with longing that restored all the hopes she could remember in what she called youth. But most of all she longed to sound Ito on the unknown awaiting her. She was certain there had been talks between him and Eleanor on the mysterious connection with Arima, and always as she grew to know him better and to inspire more confidence in him she 98 hoped he would speak and volunteer a chart for her guidance in the strange land. She did not even know whether he would be there himself but now hoped it most earnestly. When they reached the Sea of Arabia she had almost summoned up her courage to speak.

Courage? When had she ever wanted it before—but now she halted and doubted. For always the hidden sore in her heart burned and throbbed. Always, she could see these new kind friends shunning her with cold averted eyes if they had known the truth. There were moments when she felt her

position to be hatefully false and contemptible. All the good they gave her, she took on false pretenses. Not a word of it would come her way if they knew her as she was. Oh, terrible world in which one almost unthinking moment can implant a bleeding wound never to be healed or forgotten! Sometimes she would try with desperation to assure herself that it did not matter. Among sensible people such things were, at the worst, only a mistake. But, parry as she would, it had become clear that for her at all events a mistake may overshadow life. She knew it had been high treason though as yet she could not understand why, and that a hateful presence in her thoughts could strangle all joy.

“If they knew!” Those three words shut her into solitude when they flashed upon her. If she had been with Europeans she could have made silent retorts to any of their pretensions and so steeled herself. But these people, so kind and trustful!—little Sayoko—She could see her mother catching her away in terror. Possibly foolish. And yet—

There were hours when Yasoma bled
inwardly and knew that no balm grew on
earth to heal that pain.

Chapter Seven

The heavenly blue days and full-moon nights of the Indian Ocean brought a more intimate sense of companionship. Ito talked to her in very simple Japanese, widening its scope daily and correcting her firmly and carefully. He was resolved that since she did other things well she should not fail in this. She was making steady progress too in the Japanese syllabic writing—not the terrible and beautiful Chinese signs but the running-hand in common use. She got up earlier that she might work at this and the vocabulary, rejoicing in her power to interest him and detach him from others. The higher hope mingled as it often does in women with a very human triumph in her power of attraction. Impossible to tell which she will

be at in the earlier stages, and often she herself does not know. With both to fall back on she is as safe as a cat which has not only the door but the window to escape by if she is caught at the cream.

But even with this growing intimacy she was no nearer to the meaning of the reserve which guarded the mention of Arima's garden. She was not even sure that reserve existed. It might be some point of Japanese etiquette which inspired Sayoko's delicate swift evasions when she asked questions that even to herself had a point-blank tone. Finally she resolved that no Asiatic subtlety should 100 outwit her and it struck her one day, watching Ito in a round of jujutsu with the most skilful man aboard, that in jujutsu might be a sidelong means of attack.

She took her chance that afternoon, finding him alone on deck, leaning against the taffrail and looking eastward with eyes that seemed to pierce the distance of some desired goal. The sea was a glory of color—a tossing plain of metallic violet-blue edged with crisp lines

of foam whipped up by a gay breeze. Rainbows melted where the ship clove her way through eternally rising billows of jade-green crested with green fire.

“May I ask you a question?” She spoke doubtfully as one hesitates to break in upon harmony. Something in his look had that quality, and he half-sighed, but was at the ready in a moment.

“Certainly—a thousand. It is a pleasure.”

He led the way to her chair and took Bridget’s empty one. Bridget seldom used it now on account of a friendship with the gracious little stewardess who was responsible for their suite and lent a patient and never-tiring ear to the saga of the immortal Bunyan. Bridget diagnosed conversion—Yasoma, a passionate desire to learn English. But Bridget’s constant absences at least signified that her heart was at rest about the beloved. No need to be on guard here in this friendly boat.

When they were established Yasoma still hesitated: “I want so much to ask you—and yet I hardly know what I want to ask. . . . It begins with jujutsu.”

“You need not ask much about that. You are unusually good for a woman and will be better. I think you are good at all you undertake. How little I knew you in London!”

“Tell me what you thought then. Please!”—as he looked doubtfully at her. She 101 wanted to engross his thoughts, his eyes, his voice, all of him, from the rest of the world. Why should he be interested in anything but in shaping her life, now that she had surrendered and conceded the shaping to him? He answered carefully but without enthusiasm:

“It is difficult to say. I thought you were an idle rich girl who cared only for things which to me seem—No, I don’t think that now. What does it matter?”

“It matters because the change in what you

think makes me so happy. I was a fool—a waster. Why have I changed? What has opened the blind puppy’s eyes?”

He looked at her as if considering. The talk was delightful to her; as she centered his interest on her concerns Arima’s garden slipped out of her memory. She was thinking in an undercurrent how this humility must touch him; how the new charm of submission must inspire him with longing to help her with the strength which at the moment she might not have been sorry to turn into weakness. With her white silk dress fluttering about her and a mist of black hair blowing in tendrils about her temples she felt her advantages to the full. “Look at me!” pleaded the new softness in her great gray eyes. “You can’t be harsh then!” But he was looking again to the East, and his voice was in no way troubled.

“I think with Mrs. Ascham that you always wanted better things than you knew. But will you forgive me if I say that though the object of Zen is to give a man insight into his

fundamental nature people are not encouraged to talk and think much about their own personalities? Personality has to disappear, narrow egoistic interest in oneself to disperse like a dream in the night. But you wanted to ask me a question?”

No rebuke could have been more delicately administered. His smile disarmed it, 102 but she colored furiously, thinking herself caught at the cream and immediately leaped out of the heavenward window.

“I know. But my whole heart is in learning, and what I was seems to hinder what I am. Tell me some way out of it.”

“Think of something better worth thinking of. Better forget it,” he said briefly. “But the question?”

Furious with herself, she lashed out:

“You’re right. I’m always wanting to talk about myself. Stop me when I do. The question—if you have forgiven me—is, why

is it good to have worked at jujutsu? Has it a meaning I know nothing of?”

He looked at her with quick interest.

“You do not know. No! But see how you have felt! I can now tell you a little. Later you will learn more, for the thing is in your blood.”

“I love it, if you mean that. A sense of power—of—oh, it’s a very curious thing!”

“And yet to many people it means nothing but what all the world sees. Mr. Kuroda, for instance—you see he is excellently good after a fashion. It gives me some trouble to beat him, but he will not know. Never. In Japan thousands and thousands learn. But very few know.”

“Tell me.”

“I must begin; not at the beginning—that would be impossible—but yet far back. So I tell you that there is a jujutsu that all the

world knows and an inner spirit which only those know who have reached a certain stage of evolution. It has great meanings. It leads a man to high powers. That is not to say that a man may not be a fourth- or fifth-grade man—very high—and still know nothing, for power may always be blind or bad until it is trained. But if you are good at jujutsu and know the inward side also, you can do great things—things people would not easily believe. Judo is a mighty discipline for preparing the way for *satori*, which is our name for enlightenment and is the whole aim of Zen.”

103

“Zen?” He saw she was in earnest now and gave her a short sketch of the Zen masters and their teaching. She drank it in with eyes clear and honest as a boy’s. It touched him as the other had repelled him.

“But do you mean that anyone can get this enormous enlightenment in a flash and live happy ever after? Is that the secret of Arima sama’s garden?”

“That is the aim. There is no secret. Yes, anyone can receive it whose preparation will fuse them with the universal consciousness under the shock of some joy, sorrow, or perception. It is different for everyone. It comes, like the restoration of sight to the blind. Perfectly simple and perfectly convincing.”

“And do you actually know people to whom it has happened?” she asked in blank amazement.

He smiled. “Certainly.” Evidently no more questions were to be asked on that head. She said in a low voice, not looking at him but over the sea:

“And could it happen to me?”

“Of course. You have got all knowledge. You only need to flash it into power.”

A long silence. Then Yasoma said slowly:

“I’ve noticed how you and all your people

think discipline matters so enormously. In the West we think it kills individuality. Which is right? I must say when people do get self-expression on top it generally is the poorest stuff. I don't know that the world need be obliged to them for unloading."

"True, and yet if any man can express his real self all the world listens. Look at Rousseau, Pepys, Walt Whitman. . . . Many more. Business stops, pleasure stops. It has always been like that. Even when a man can tell a little bit of his real self—people must listen."

104

"Yes, if the real selves are worth producing. But they're as rare as genius," she said with huge scorn. "No. I like your discipline and reserve better."

He leaned forward eagerly, looking into her eyes with that dark selfless gaze which always enchained her.

"But every man's real self *is* genius and beauty and power. Only the gem is hidden

under such tons of clay that he himself does not know it is there. Your Buddha of Nazareth. Ours of India. They speak. Men must listen. Our discipline—I mean what the men teach to whom I belong—is only a way of mining for the knowledge that every man can and will find when the right time comes. And one way is jujutsu.”

“Why?”

“Think! How wary, how wise, how self-controlled, you must be if you want to excel! Your mind as well as your body. These things are far less done now than in the old days, but even now a great teacher is stern with his pupils. He will say: ‘You must not drink. You must not love money. You must be pure from vice. No pride or arrogance. Humility. There must be perfect control of the mind. It must act in harmony with the body. It combines inspiration, spirit, and power. But power is the last and lowest for it must follow the others as his shadow follows a man.’ Hear Arima teach how perfect serenity and imperturbability can be attained in danger

whether it is spiritual or bodily. It means the right or wrong use of strength, and if the world could learn *that*—” He stopped suddenly, horrified to think how he had been discoursing to a young and probably uninterested woman.

“Forgive me,” he said lamely.

“Forgive you? I could listen all day. I see—I see dimly. You mean it’s a kind of reflection of life itself and the qualities wanted are the same for both?”

105

“Yes, but much more than that. We use it. We have men who can use supernormal force by realizing that the universe is mind-stuff only, and using their own trained mind-stuff to dominate the universal force which we call *ai* in Japan and they call *akasha* in India. This comes into the occult side of jujutsu too.”

“Yes—I’ve heard Mrs. Ascham talk of it. No one else cares a snap in London. No wonder! Look at the awful frauds hawking about there and in America.”

“Exactly!” said Ito, frowning a little. “The frauds fattening on a misrepresentation of the truth which they have never known. Yet I know men myself who could stop this ship with a gesture. Who with a thought could compel the captain to turn her bows westward.”

He stopped suddenly—feeling that he had said too much. She stared at him, fascinated. It startled herself sometimes to know how he held her by his lightest word. A look in his eyes—that tone in his voice recalled to her a saying of Eleanor’s: “Something in Ito is power. One fights it awhile and then follows rejoicing.” How she had laughed at that. Now she understood.

“But is it true? If it were why doesn’t all the world know? Why don’t they force the world to know? If it’s good for it, they *ought*.”

“It is good for no one to be forced, and the poorest of men cannot be dragged or beaten into belief. When bird life was in the reptile stage could it have flown? Ask your scientific

men?”

“But reason can be convinced—and it should be.”

“Reason has nothing to do with what we are talking of. It lives in a realm much above reason. Reason is not a winged thing. It walks the earth armed with a 106 microscope and mathematics. And to try to convince the people by marvels—that is folly. This is not magic. It is wisdom. The marvels are all within except on great and special occasions. And even then there is hesitation. Also the faculty of true, inspired wonder is rare in human beings. It is because you have it that you have been able to learn the beginnings of jujutsu, and to feel there is more behind.”

There was a long silence—the sea slipping past them alive with color and cold fire. A sense of freedom like that of the gray gulls skimming the billows filled her with delight.

“And in a day or two we shall be at

Colombo,” she said, as it seemed irrelevantly. “And that will be the first time my foot touches Asia. And yet I have Asiatic blood in me. Did Eleanor Ascham tell you?”

“She told me.”

Another silence. Then:

“Do you think that can be the reason why I want to learn the ways of Asia?”

“I have always believed that, since I knew you had a tincture of us in you. Though I have known Europeans go far—far!”

“When we reach Colombo and land will you shake hands with me as an Asiatic?”

He laughed:

“I shall not shake hands. That is Europe and a greeting that displeases me. For psychic reasons long forgotten we do not encourage contact. But I will bow to you like a Japanese and you shall salaam to me like an Indian princess. Have you ever worn the dress of

your people?”

“We have a dress of my great-great-grandmother’s. It is made of woven gold so pure that it cannot crumple. You could destroy it only by burning, and then it would be a lump of gold. There is with it a sari of muslin—wheat-color and edged and woven with gold, yet so light that it floats on the air. And sandals woven with gold and her jewels—massed rubies and emeralds in pure soft gold. Well—I was staying on Long Island with friends, and they had a dance where everyone was to be her great-great-grandmother. I chose to wear that. And they liked it. You should have seen how lovely some of those girls were in old English, Dutch, Italian dresses. . . . You know New York—America?”

107

“I know. The great melting-pot of the nations. The fusion of Oriental and Western thought must come there. It cannot come anywhere else. England is too busy governing her peoples to sympathize with them. But will you wear your dress at the party Captain

Takao gives after we leave Colombo? Mr. Kimura with four of his actors will give a *Nō* play later—one of our ancient Buddhist plays. Did you know his grandfather had been one of the people who helped to rekindle Japanese interest in them? We shall all wear our own dress. You could not do less at a *Nō*.”

At another moment this would have kindled her into a frenzy of interest, for the dramatic was in her blood, and when someone had spoken of the singularly quiet elderly man as an actor it had been interesting. But now she was quick to feel how skilfully Ito was leading her away from the main subject when he thought she had been told as much as was good for her. All that about the dress, the play—very clever—but she would not be beaten.

“No. That dress isn’t here. But you must tell me what a *Nō* is. . . . I want to ask something else. Will you tell me about a Mr. Scott who went out to see your friend Arima sama and has given up the world since? So they say in London. Mrs. Ascham knew

something about him, but I wasn't interested then."

He looked at her reflectively:

"It is odd you should ask that. You have instincts. Mr. Scott is coming aboard at Colombo and going on to Japan. You know the Parringtons are landing. He has their cabin."

Now why had not that been told before? But now that he was coming she knew she wanted no Englishman to break in upon the happy friendships of that delightful boat. And she knew his cousins in London—the Colwyns—particularly gay and rampant young people in her own gay and rampant set. They had said disparaging things of him in the most modern slang. A man who was rich—might have had any amount of "life" and was simply playing a mug's game! They didn't exactly know what it was, but one never saw him in any of the decent places where the much-photographed men and women of the present day congregate and struggle to keep

themselves in the public and profoundly uninterested eye. Her feelings were unmixed as she heard of Scott's arrival, and she showed them in a slight frown.

They talked of indifferent things for a minute, and he left her angry and sore that he did not grasp at every moment as she did, yet bewildered with a sense of truths looming up like mountains hidden in clouds. What was his attraction? Did others feel it? No—not as she did. When he came on deck her heart would throb as if conscious that he carried the very issues of life for her. A man of a widely different race, yet nearer to her than any she had ever known. For all her needs he had gifts. Whatever dreams she dreamed he could fulfil and more. And now a word might open the door to something unspeakable and wonderful. He had not said the word but its vibration filled the air. Could it be that he would never speak it? She bitterly resented Scott's intrusion. The men would share a password and a secret, and she would be left out. And if so, what was she to do in Japan? Break her heart for something she

could never understand and—Suddenly Maxwell flashed into her mind. Ito might blot him out for an hour, but he returned.

Suppose some wildest dream came true which as yet she had never dared to dream, then—Maxwell. She could neither tell the truth nor deceive Ito. All was ended. But, better crumbs than no bread. Better to listen with a heart daily more drawn to him than be driven into the darkness of distance. No, she could not choose her way. It must choose her.

The strangeness of life and the way one must wring out its meaning for oneself with none to help! None. People suggested, hinted, and then you must worry out the problem alone. She went down moodily to her cabin and found Bridget sitting there marking the place in her book with her thumb while she looked up to smile.

“Sure it’s you that’s having the fine time, child, with all these good folk! Now that little stewardess—she’s a Christian if she knew it, as sure as I sit here. The nice little ways of

her would get you by the heart. And as sharp! I'd set *her* to catch a weasel at four crossroads any day! 'Read me in your book, Bridget san,' says she, for I told her to call me by me name and she sticks on *san* to it the way they do everything upside down, but so nice, for all! So I sat and read a bit to her, and she harkened like a lark flying up to the sun and supping it all up every word."

"What did you read, Bridgie dear?"

Bridget removed her thumb and fixed her spectacles and read in a voice that had at least the beauty of serene and perfect understanding.

110

"Now while they were thus drawing towards the Gate behold a company of the heavenly host came out to meet them and this done they compassed them round on every side, and here also they had the City itself in view and they thought they heard the bells therein ring to welcome them—and after that they shut up the gates, which when I had seen I wished myself among them."

Yasoma listened in thoughtful silence to the mighty English, which can never grow old and outworn. “I wished myself among them.” That was the cry that rang in the emptiness of her own heart. Eleanor Ascham, Ito, Scott—they all had something she had not. Something they did not withhold yet guarded as a thing most treasured. Would they shut her out always? Or were they only holding off a little—perhaps anxiously, to see whether their food of life would nourish her, as people at home may do when an alien comes among them and sits down at their table.

Strange moisture sprang into her eyes—tears of loneliness and doubt, and Bridget misread them and pulled the girl down to her embrace.

“Don’t cry, Miss Soma!—Don’t cry, child! Sure that City’s door isn’t closed night nor day in anyone’s face, though he says it in the book. If I could I’d put in my word with him to scratch that out, for it isn’t true like the rest of it.”

“It isn’t that, Bridgie. It’s what will they do with us when we get to Japan? It’s so far away! If they won’t have us—I can’t go back to London. I’d hate it now.”

“Not have you! Sure, they’ll be jumping mad to get you. I never yet knew the man or woman that wouldn’t. And your eyes 111 beginning to open now like a blind kitten’s that couldn’t stand the light and had to get used to it. It’s in me bones, Miss Soma, that maybe Japan’s the Delectable Country and we’ll come back wiser than we went because we’ll be apt to meet the Interpreter there. Would you say the Interpreter might be Mr. Ito? I’ve a great liking for the quiet face of him and the voice that’d wile a bird off a bush, and the way he doesn’t think of himself no more than if he never was.”

But Yasoma said, despairing:

“I don’t know, Bridgie. I don’t even guess what they have. Mr. Ito has it. I have nothing.”

“But for the Lord’s sake don’t fall in love with him, Miss Soma,” Bridget said anxiously. “He isn’t that sort, and I don’t know what he is but that he has something hidden up that matters more to him than gold and diamonds.”

Was it a needed warning? Yasoma flashed into pride.

“Then let him keep them! I ask for nothing. Oh, I don’t know what I want! I dreamed of it last night—a silver peacock flying into the sunset. Well, we’ll see. There’s an Englishman coming on board at Colombo and Mr. Ito says he knows a lot. Maybe he’ll spare me a crumb or two. Isn’t the boat like life itself, Bridgie—people coming and going, and big things and little things and all sorts! It’s as good as a play, isn’t it?”

But Bridget was not to be tricked into laughter. She felt something behind Yasoma’s voice.

“Don’t you be play-acting, child. Now

harken, and I'll read a word that's like yourself to comfort you: 'Thy setting out is good, for thou hast given credit to the truth. Thou art a Ruth who did for the love she bare the Lord her God, leave the land of her nativity to come out and go with a people she knew not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work and a full reward be given thee of the Lord under whose wings thou art come to trust.' Isn't that great, child?"

112

Great enough, but not the way the case presented itself to Yasoma as she lay in utter loneliness that night listening to the soft rush of the sea past her window. He had not spoken a word to her after dinner—had sat with other Japanese talking and laughing. And every day was golden sand dropping to waste. What should she do when the boat reached Japan and he went his way and she hers, and all that happy floating world scattered to meet no more? The distance and the dark made her shudder. What was the meaning of this feeling for Ito? Perhaps not love, as Western people count it, but one of

the many strange and tender relationships known in Asia between master and pupil. She need not fear it. That fear was perhaps the last breaking of her European prepossessions—the Western grip relaxing and leaving her hand outstretched for another. Another? Yet, first and foremost, there was one gift she asked of the Rising Sun—forgetfulness.

Chapter Eight

It was when the great boat swam easily into the gay enclosed harbor of Colombo that a true sense of the East and her own part in it broke on her. When the formalities and confusions of landing were over and she stood on the clean red road outside the landing place, bathed in sweet sunshine, surrounded by breaking waves of color in the passing people, in the thrilling green of the leaves and wild tropic beauty of blossom, she felt the answering cry in herself—“This is mine. Lovely—lovely! Why did I hide from it so long? I was dying, withering for it.”

Ito and others had wished to escort her and show her round, but some instinct of the emotion the place would bring her warned

her to be alone with Bridget, and she saw the rest disperse and still stood, lost in beauty—until she became aware of a man looking steadily at her from the steps of a large colonnaded building. A tall man, dark-haired, but with curiously light sea-blue eyes noticeable enough in a face bronzed dark by tropic suns. His broad shoulders and air of clean-run strength were pleasant items in her summing up. For her, love of sportsmanship had often blotted out the appeal of the more durable virtues, and this was certainly a sportsman. Her instinct set him in flannels before the wicket or taking the big jumps she delighted in with the Quorn. But why was he so obviously interested in her? Another instinct outran the first and said—
John Scott.

114

She looked away sharply, and he came down the steps:

“May I ask if you’ve just landed from the Nippon Yusen Kaisha boat? I’m Scott, and Mrs. Ascham told me I was to introduce myself. I’m sure you’re Miss Brandon.”

It was difficult to be as certain as yesterday that she was going to dislike him, and he could detect no reservation in her smile.

“Now can I do anything for you? You must see something of the place. Oh, I say! forgive me! I see a friend.”

He dashed off to Ito, who was engaging a taxi, and when he got back her smile was less cordial and she needed no help.

“No, thanks. Don’t trouble. I’ve got a car, and we’re going for a drive and to Mount Lavinia.”

“Then I suppose we shall meet on board. I’m going to Japan.”

He was off like a shot, and presently a taxi passed her at speed in which he and Ito were talking and laughing. So that was that. She had no use for him. She wanted nothing but the sunshine and beauty—the kindly dark faces and all the loveliness of home, for home it seemed to her, an instinct transpiercing all

her Western training and heredity. It was a perfumed memory, which if it had slept for years awakened now in passion. She did not speak, and Bridget was silent, lost in a kind of amazement at the vivid life of man and nature about her. The thought in Yasoma's mind was, "If it were not for Ito I should stay here."

The man was driving them by circuitous ways that she might see the lovely city crouching like a Dryad among her palms and blossoming trees, and they passed a little Buddhist temple, very still and quiet, dreaming as one who has solved all riddles and cares only to meditate on the sweetness of the solution. A few yellow-robed mendicant monks were gliding about it, and she halted the car and went in, Bridget following. It drew her. She must be alone. She passed through a palm-shaded courtyard towards the dimness of the shrine. On the steps stood a young monk robed in naming orange; his face young and intellectual as an Egyptian image of Thoth. His eyes fell on her feet, and he spoke in English with a foreign

inflection:

“It is good to remove the shoes in visiting holy places.”

For a moment she hesitated whether to turn and walk out, offended, or to obey and see for herself what this worship might mean. She left Bridget in the courtyard, looking about her with smiling curiosity:

“For sure, Miss Soma, the Lord sees the heart, and if the creatures think it pleases Him for them to walk about in yellow and eat not so much as an egg ’tis the more credit to them than to be going about in gimcracks and high heels and eating beef and mutton every day. —And cocktails! I wouldn’t blame them, God knows! No, I’ll not go in. There’s an idol, and me shoes have me ate with the tightness.”

With this valediction Yasoma entered the shrine, leaving her shoes behind her and treading lightly.

It was very quiet. The hour insured that. Long before, the poorer people had bowed to the earth, had offered their flowers and recited their *gathas* before the calm Image gazing out into the palms, not as though seeing them but beholding a something beyond, imponderable and universal.

That Image held her spellbound. No Western artist would have passed it as true to Nature's handiwork. Its smooth modeling ignored all but surface texture. Yet it supremely achieved its end. Calm as death and sweet as sleep it dreamed in an ecstasy of quiet, spreading reverie through the air, lulling as the breaking of ripples on the golden sands of eternity—a rising tide to cover the woes of earth with a shining ocean reflecting only the sun and moon and wheeling constellations. It touched a new nerve of beauty in her restless heart—the beginnings of peace wiser than all joy.

116

One old man, very evidently in extreme poverty, had laid two or three white flowers plucked from a fragrant bower upon the altar-

shelf, and was repeating in a soft monotone words which she did not understand then but was to know very well later.

“Homage to Him, the Blessed One, the
Exalted One, the Utterly
Enlightened One.

Honor to Him, the Exalted One, the
Buddha Supreme.”

He repeated it three times and she stood listening. She desired to understand yet was content to take her ignorance as part of the mystery of peace which inhabited the temple. Standing there in the white silence of thought, which the quiet voice only accentuated, some unknown influence passed over and through her, and she fell into a meditation unlike any she had ever known before. Was it a waking dream?—Memory?—Hope? She could not tell. But for a moment which seemed longer than all her life she felt the ancestral roots thrill within her, saw herself returning as a daughter to the house of her fathers, welcomed with the close intimate expression of some deep bond of union between them

that nothing in time or eternity could break. Slowly she sank upon her knees beside the old man, and knelt with clasped hands looking up into the calm face above her, the unfathomable smile softening the edges of golden lips which might otherwise have been sad.

117

She was not conscious of worshipping or of any definite thought, but her soul floated on the bosom of quiet, and again time passed immeasurably. Yet it was only a few minutes before she remembered and rising to her feet followed the old man out of the temple. The monk still stood under the shade of the palms and Bridget waited, unwilling to approach an “idol” yet in full sympathy with the spirit of the place. Yasoma went up to him, her heart beating more quickly than usual; she, whose self-possession had not easily flickered since childhood, trembled a little before the onrush of things she had never known yet realized, whether through some dim hereditary memory coming through gates of life and death, or—Could there be any truth in that strange belief that past lives may whisper an

unknown language in this?

“May I ask you a question?” she said, feeling utterly unlike anything she had known of herself, her thoughts perplexed, the hot sun-warmed earth striking its vibrations up through her shoeless feet and through all her body.

“Certainly you may ask,” he answered, standing stiffly apart, with his great palm-leaf fan held like a shield between them.

“I should like to know the meaning of the prayer that old man said.”

The monk pondered a moment. Not a few sightseers came to the temple, but never before had an English man or woman asked that question. They had been patronizing, careless, scholarly—as the case might be; and they either knew or did not care to know what such a one might say. He looked at her doubtfully and began:

“An English lady—”

“I am not an English lady. I am partly Indian,” she said eagerly, smiling with pleasure as she saw a gleam of cordiality in his face. 118

“As that is so—I repeat his words in English. But I beg you to notice they are not to ask for good things for himself. They are a salutation.”

He repeated them, then added:

“And there followed another salutation to the Lord, the Perfect One. First I give it in Pali, then in English.”

The deep sonorous words almost swept her away again on their current, but the sharp-cut English presently caught her back. That was the current coin of every day, but not so the words.

“Such indeed is that Blessed One, Exalted,
Omniscient, endowed with
knowledge and virtue, auspicious,
Knower of Worlds, a Guide Incomparable

for the training of men,
Teacher of Divine beings and of men,
Enlightened, Holy.”

On one sentence the tendrils of her mind fixed and wound. “A Guide Incomparable for the training of men.” Was that what she had come to the vast heart of Asia to seek? For a moment it seemed to be so. The monk continued:

“Well expounded is the Law by the
Blessed One,
To be self-realized, with immediate fruit.
To be approached, to be seen; possible to
enter,
To be attained by the wise each for
himself.”

“May I write it down?” she was beginning to ask, when suddenly she saw Ito with the man who had introduced himself as Scott entering at the far end of the courtyard and also saw the monk’s eyes light up in recognition. She made a hurried excuse, scrambled her shoes on and hurried to the car,

pretending not to see them. . . . The good moment was gone.

Yet, pulling a notebook out, she wrote two sentences in it as the car pushed into the long street leading to the hotel by the sea where they were to lunch. These were all she could remember, but they seemed to hold extraordinary value—a pearl in the shell which in England she had thought so dim and discolored:

“A Guide Incomparable for the training of men.”

That was one. The other:

“The Law to be self-realized, to be attained by the wise.”

She turned to Bridget then: “Did you like it, Bridgie dear?”

“Well, I did and I didn’t, Miss Soma. ’Twas a kind of feeling in me that the Blessed Lord would find himself at home there, for ’twas a

clean little place and quiet, the way He liked it; and no Vanity Fair like some of them big churches in London. But if 'twas to have images in it and words instead of deeds— why, I declare to goodness, I don't know if I liked it or I didn't."

"They call Him the Blessed One there too," said Yasoma and relapsed into thought. Does the Wind of the Spirit, blown about the world as a great voice lighting on all altars in tongues of fire, care what they call Him? Could men understand at all how He should be called? Could the unutterable Word be spoken if they did?

But what were these strange uninvited thoughts which Asia receiving her daughter had flung into her bosom? She shook them off almost angrily as the car swept up the road through palm groves to the hotel washed by the sea forever, where gay groups were sitting under the shade of gayer scarlet and green umbrellas in dazzling sunshine reflected from jeweled waves and the musical crash of the surf sounded on

rocks crowded with happy brown children. Her English blood reasserted itself, and she was eager and interested at once.

It was delightful to order a luncheon of the foreign things one tasted exotically in Regent Street but which were at home here; to see the piled dishes of tropic fruits bright as Aladdin's jewels, and to go out afterwards and sip iced drinks under the umbrellas, while the sun having passed the zenith began his third stride to the west and the gay umbrellas were furled.

“Bridgie, suppose we were to stay here longer before we go on to Japan. It's in my blood—this kind of place,” she said suddenly. She knew perfectly well that her jealousy of Scott was speaking and nothing else.

“But sure you wouldn't leave all your friends and Mr. Ito and lose your ticket and Mrs. Ascham wouldn't be pleased, my lamb,” said Bridgie, hurling all her objections into one sentence. “And why wouldn't we come back if you don't like Japan? But I declare to

goodness 'tis true the people here would get your heart with their nice easy way and toss of the head and the men with their hair done up in a comb like nice decent God-fearing people would be, and their long petticoats so modest and all! I declare you'd see more brass and boldness in five minutes in London than you'd see here all day, and the women walking so quiet with their eyes down! 'Tis they have the sense in them!"

This was gratifying, and it would make for Yasoma's comfort that Asia had had the good fortune to please Bridget so far. Its manners had certainly more reserve than those of the society of which she had been a part in London, and though this had a stiffness and strangeness she liked it. Hush!—She knew even before she saw him.

It came out of the hotel followed by Scott and took two chairs at a table with their backs to Yasoma yet so near that what they said could be heard. The brim of her terai hid her face, and in any case they talked with too much interest to care for

outsiders. Bridget was staring contentedly out over the bathers splashing in the tepid water of the little blue bay, riding absurd india-rubber fish and elephants and challenging the surf to knock them over. She was looking through them to her own thoughts and was quite engrossed and happy.

Yasoma stole a swift glance at the two men. Yes, they were discussing things she wanted to hear. She would speak the instant it became confidential, and until then what harm could there be? Their intimacy unreasonably annoyed her, just as she had known it would. If Ito had so many European friends he was less likely to see the importance of a young European woman accepting him as her guide. There had certainly been times when she had thought it should flatter him. Now, here was Scott, looking at him as if every word he said was gospel.

“So you really mean to give yourself up to the work for four years?” Ito said, beckoning to a waiter for lime sodas.

“Rather!” Scott answered cheerily.

“Cheerily!” Yes, that was just the word. How one hated cheery blue-eyed people who butted in where nobody wanted them! But Ito unfortunately did!

“I am uncommonly glad,” he said. “I thought you would.”

“As a matter of fact I’m going to devote myself to rubbing the idea of Eastern thought into the Western brain. Now that Western science is going off the deep end into philosophy—and *Indian* philosophy though they don’t know that—it’s time we began. Every day I live I see more clearly the absurdity of neglecting it. My dear fellow, it’s a whole new universe of thought and moreover a commentary explaining Western science and many of the things on which my people set most store. It’s really the biggest thing going today. . . . I’m all in.”

Yasoma could hear the pleasure in Ito’s

voice.

“I saw it long ago. I said so to Arima sama. But for you he would have doubted the possibility of the Western attitude being receptive—but you converted him. Your experiences in our country . . .”

There was a moment’s silence, then Scott said briefly and in a very different tone:

“They changed not only the face of the world for me, but life and death, body and soul. The universe.”

Again the silence of understanding. Then Ito asked:

“But what are your plans?”

“A year’s study in Japan. Then I’ve been working at Hindi and Singhalese and getting splendid practice here and in India. I mean—imagine how the English sitting round us would laugh if they could know!—I mean to become a wandering *sannyasin* in India for a

while and then—”

“A *sannyasin*?” Ito asked meditatively. “Well —‘Full of peace is the homeless life!’”

“Yes—a wandering beggar, visiting all the sacred places, in touch with the great Indian thinkers. A splendid training. I must learn how to give out what I know. And a sound knowledge of India will help in many ways in America and England. They’ve had so many frauds and fakes knocking about. I shall show them up with pious delight—the money-grubbing scoundrels! But it’ll take a hell of a time to undo the harm they’ve done!”

Yasoma raised her voice:

“Mr. Ito, I can hear all you say. Do you and Mr. Scott mind? We’ve met already.”

Scott turned and looked at her with a smile that lit up his rather ordinary face and queer blue eyes as a ray of sunshine illuminates a dull landscape.

“Come along and join us. Our table’s larger than yours.” They twisted her chair round, leaving Bridget to the bathers and the marvelous blue sparkle of the surf as it shattered into spray on the rocks. Yasoma looked him straight in the face with her dark challenging gaze.

“Did you say a beggar? And why?”

He answered in a very different tone from the one he had kept for Ito.

“Why not? A very jolly adventure! Perhaps I shall write a best seller round it one of these days. I suppose it’s about the only country in the world where a beggar gets in on top. Anyhow it’s quite the most aristocratic way of sightseeing in India.”

He laughed and she smiled coolly. He perplexed her and must be studied. A man with that kind of career in front of him should not attempt jocularly. She was surer than ever that he would be in the way.

“Well, even dirt and matted hair and ghastly food are better than London,” she said; and it was his turn to look perplexed.

He had of course heard of her from others as well as from Eleanor Ascham, and with the best will in the world everybody had prepared him to think she would be very much out of place in the business which was taking him to Japan with Ito. He was puzzled, wanted to say the right thing and had not an idea how to do it. He made her feel herself in the way, and she thought Ito probably shared the feeling.

“You don’t like London?” said Scott.

“If I had, should I have left it? I’m going to Japan to be introduced to Mr. Arima.”

Scott opened his eyes. “That is a very different proposition!” His voice was so perplexed that it startled her.

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“Do you mean you think he won’t see me? I’ve been wanting to ask Mr. Ito and didn’t

dare. Do tell me what will happen?”

She was trying to be at her ease but her face betrayed her.

“I can answer part of that,” Ito said, smiling a little. “The first thing which will happen is your settling down in the little temple where Arima sama has taken rooms for you. I found a letter here. A quiet little place—but I think it will please you. Then, if you wish to know Arima sama and see our life, that is easy. For the effect upon yourself, who can answer? And that is the whole story.”

Scott shook his head:

“Not quite the whole. I never knew a man go through Arima’s hands but he left his mark on him. He isn’t like anyone else and he doesn’t teach or preach in the ordinary sense at all. But he gets there all right. He’s like a ferment in the blood. You’re not sure what he has said or done, but once he gets at you you give yourself no peace. You have to fight for your life. Still—what’s the good of talking?”

You'll see for yourself soon."

Again that note set her aloof. She said fretfully:

"I wish I could stay on here. This place enchants me with its sun and gorgeous kind of beauty. I have Indian blood in me, and I could be happy here. So little seems to be expected of one. Just to live and enjoy."

Scott smiled. "Well—shall I go and ask if they have rooms here? They're generally full up. But you certainly would be at home all right!"

Not a word of remonstrance from Ito. Stung and angry she got up. "No thanks, I must be going on board. All the same this place makes me homesick."

She could scarcely drag Bridget from the happy bathers and glittering palms, but at last she got her into the car and again they drifted round the town while Yasoma probed and could reach no conclusion. She

began to feel that she had made a bad break in insisting on her Asiatic blood. It might be piquant in England, but it let one down out here, and Scott's contempt—for so she imagined it—gave her edged discomfort. Oh yes, she understood that kind of “fine feller”—as one of the Japanese on board had humorously labeled the stand-alooft Englishman. It was his mission, as it is every Englishman's, to represent All England in a prize show of objections to everything that has not the divine sanction of Magna Charta and the Times!

All the same, fine-fellerism gives one something to hang on to. If Scott were to wander India in a loin-cloth he would always be hedged into safety by his disapprobations. But for herself—she had the temperament that is fatally swept away by beauty or instinct. She could not remember a single disapproval that had ever stood in the way of her likings, and now the whole lovely island called to her in melting murmurs, “You are mine. My arms are about you. Live and be happy!” And that would be easy too—but for

Ito. She would watch—watch, study his relations with Scott, and make herself the sedulous ape of what pleased him best. She let slip, however, a half-scornful word to Bridget about Scott as a prospective mendicant and found it received with all the placidity of experience.

“There’s many a good soul that begged his way from door to door and blessed them that gave and himself that took. Sure the Blessed Lord hadn’t more than a handful of corn for his dinner now and again though He wasn’t above a better one when He got a taste of their best. Why wouldn’t the gentleman do what he likes after all? He’s in good company. ’Tisn’t out of the rich people the words comes that’ll be said when they’re dust. Now, I liked the wonderful innocent smile of him when he let that out and his blue eyes like a child’s that’d laugh at all you’d say.”

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Yasoma was exasperated.

“I believe you’d go with him for twopence

and leave me, you old goose!”

“And *that* I wouldn’t! I declare I think sometimes ’tis you’re my pilgrimage, Miss Soma, for I get that tumbled up and down in my mind about you that I don’t know what to be expecting next, whether ’tis Apollyon or the Shining Ones. But, like I used to say when you got a cold in your head, you’ll be worse before you’re better. You’ll take a souse in the Slough of Despond before you get to the Interpreter’s Gate, and much good may it do you! . . . Glory be to God, look at them Indians with nothing on but a duster and no harm to it!”

There was no countering Bridget; Yasoma had known it from the cradle. John Bunyan is a mighty champion and arms his soldiers against all retort. And why? Because life is his theme, and he handles it like a master. Yasoma reflected, not for the first time, that whatever might be his relation to the Rock of Ages his feet were certainly planted on the Rock of Art which is Truth and Beauty and coeternal. She fully agreed with Bridget that

she was likely to be much worse before she was better.

“Well, now, Miss Soma, isn’t it a grand thing to see a place so far from home and all so nice and decent? And the way them poor priests in yellow walks up and down as if they wouldn’t say Boo to a goose, instead of the grandees we have over yonder preaching blathers in their big barracks of churches! Well, I’m glad I saw it anyhow!”

She was silent a moment, then began to croon in a thin aging voice:

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“Blest is the day that I began
A pilgrim for to be.
And blessed also be that man
That thereto movèd me.”

Yasoma did not hear. She was considering how far Scott would have it in his power to spoil the voyage. She was certain he would watch her every word with Ito. Hateful! Not that there was anything to hide. It was that she was out for Asia, and she wanted no

English criticisms thrust down her throat.

The sun rolled like a golden wheel into the sea at six, and they went aboard. She shut herself into her cabin and ordered dinner there. Let the two men have the evening to themselves! From her window she watched the lights of Colombo sparkling in the dark like its own jewels. On deck someone was singing to a banjo. Bridget had gone to bed when Yasoma realized that the ship was moving and Colombo falling into the past.

Ito and Scott were marching round the deck. They had passed her darkened window several times, and twice she caught her own name and held her breath for more. They were slowing down this time—halting. But what had she lost in the beginning?

“Yes—I know!” Scott said. “Of course she’s a beauty, and nobody objects to that any more than to roses in the garden. But sex, money, and beauty—a fashionable beauty at that—and any one of the three enough to slam Arima’s door in her face.”

“Not beauty. Arima sama would not be the man he is if a woman’s beauty were not a divine gesture to him as much as to you or me. He too has roses in his garden,” said the voice she loved.

“I know. But it’s a big three. ‘Much is to learn and much to forget’ before that young woman wrings a word out of him. Besides, don’t you see her nerves are all anyhow? Something has knocked her over and cut her about badly. She’s met fear face to face, and that’s why she came. It’s going to be difficult. I know our women better than you.”

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Yasoma clenched her hands in dumb terror. Now Ito’s voice, dearer than dear even if what it should utter were death to hear.

“How can I discuss her? But I say this. Of course she has suffered. Who escapes? But it has given her heroic courage. When I see how she conquers her fears—”

He was silent for a moment, then added:

“A fashionable beauty? No—a lost child—struggling to the light of home. Can we help her? You know what I owe Arima sama—and yet I doubt whether even he will have understanding enough. She needs it.”

Again he was silent, and when he spoke it was in a different tone.

“The open sea. Would you like to read Arima sama’s letter?” The subject was dismissed.

They stood a while talking, but Yasoma heard no more. The dear human pity—the first she had had. And it came from him. He did not know but he understood.

Tears ran down her face. She thought, “He is the only person who has ever made me cry. I am glad—glad!” Nothing else mattered but to be worthy of his tenderness, of “this guide incomparable for the training of men”! With all her being she loved him and neither asked nor knew of any label for that love which enfolded all the meanings of life and mingled earth with heaven.

Chapter Nine

But a good minute passes, and three days out from Colombo Yasoma's jealousy of the friendship between Ito and Scott and his interference with her reign on the Hana Maru was sullen and smoldering. Had he dared to warn Ito? She held him off with dropped eyelashes and unsmiling mouth when he tried to use Eleanor Ascham as a support; and since a woman's unsexual jealousy is inscrutable to a man of his type he went off on his own occasions, and as she lay in her deck chair she watched through those eyelashes as from an ambush to see him pacing round and round the deck with Ito—talking and laughing about matters in which she had no part. He lived with the Japanese—the few English on board had no interest for

him. Now and then she caught a word and longed for more as he passed with Ito. She tortured herself with the thought that Ito never talked to her now, and she made it impossible that he should, flourishing a kind of scornful independence in their faces. The adjustment of the Western mind to Asia is often a painful process, and to Yasoma it began to be anguish. She had never understood Ito—it was enough to adore his strength and reserve and deeply hidden tenderness even if she could not grasp his ideals. But now Scott's intimacy with him and the joy Ito took in it compelled her to see that understanding was demanded of her too if she was to be anything to him. All her vain dreams of attraction and conquest must be dismissed forever.

Through Scott's eyes she realized that Ito would be bound by nothing. The world did not hold a fetter that would bind him. His only feeling for her was sympathy and a desire to help her as eager as that of the Indian saint who, watching the cruel beating

of a bullock, saw the weals form and fill with blood on his own arms and breast. In that way only could she move him.

But Scott could do more. He could walk on the mountain ways with him in full understanding. They could laugh together and inspire one another. Sometimes when they sat near her she would pretend to read while listening jealously to catch the note of comradeship—a note as spontaneous as breathing. Her woman's mind found it difficult to grasp their quick shifts from the sublime to the ridiculous—her mental joints creaked while theirs slid. “Fool that I was never to laugh with him!” she thought. “John Scott has twice the sense.”

They were talking of Einstein and piecing his discoveries and theories with Zen Buddhism. “Excellent jigsaw!” Scott said, and then:

“I say, Ito, I got a simply juicy thing about Einstein from one of my American papers. A regular earful. Listen!

“Nature and Nature’s laws lay hid in night.
God said, ‘Let Newton be.’ And there was
Light.

It could not last. The Devil howling ‘Ho!
Let Einstein be!’ restored the status quo.

“From the Holy Transcript! Heavenly stuff,
isn’t it?” said Scott, rubbing his hands while
Ito crackled with laughter.

After that she listened impatiently to a
skirmishing argument over American
humor, Scott declaring it to be the
most insanely good-tempered impious stuff
that had ever opened up an entirely new
conception of God and the Devil—“both
lovable really and only a trifle shy of each
other”—while Ito maintained that Scott
didn’t understand the first thing about it; no
European possibly could. They didn’t even
know the language and only pretended in
order to please rich relations. Furious denials
from Scott, while Ito gravely produced a
pocketbook, and such words as “boloney”
and “hooey” and the like rattled about her
ears, and Scott’s successes and failures so

delighted them both that they forgot her existence.

“At all events, there’s no cruelty in the stuff they put over,” was Scott’s conclusion. “I never heard a cruel word there. Now the French—they run a pin through human nature and leave it wriggling for life. The Yanks believe in it. Mind you, an Englishman can be pretty nasty when he chooses. You were at Oxford. You ought to know.”

“I do know. The only people in the world who despise intellect and hurl a suet pudding at its head when they meet it.”

“You shut up about English intellect! Give us some Japanese wisecracks, and then we’ll talk. Come now—honest!—is there a single joke at large in Japan? For, if so, I never met it. Augustly condescend to honorably break it to me if there is. How can you crack a joke in a language that bows to itself six times in every sentence?”

Another storm of argument and laughter and

a challenge to a public bout of judo to settle the question of Japanese humor versus American. Ito threatened to kill Scott with a new variety of *kubi-gatame* or neck lock. They swung off to fix up the arrangements for next day, leaving Yasoma bored and bewildered. What could such stuff matter to either? The fundamental boy in man is alternately the despair and the passion of woman.

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“How can a woman do that kind of slapstick stuff? So stupid!” she thought angrily. “But it’s worth while. They tire of our companionship like a shot and can’t endure it at all without a man’s background of play and business. Well, my friend, you shall teach me even if you hate me as much as I do you!”

She caught Scott as he came back and talked judo to him with such sense and spirit that he looked at her with new interest. This was by no means the conceited modish beauty he had imagined, and against whose whims he had cautioned Ito. No—good stuff, and knew what she was talking about! She played up

for all she was worth, thinking with some contempt how easy it was to make some men think as one pleased. It would not be easy with Ito. Something in her which patronized Scott trembled before Ito.

“I wish you would give me a few points yourself,” she said, with excellent earnestness. “I’ve noticed everyone has a different style and one can pick up a lot from each person one takes on. Will you? Oh, Ito sama *couldn’t* have told you I was good. He only meant like a dog walking on its hind legs. My genius at judō is an infinite capacity for picking brains. Let me pick yours! I know you’re wonderful.”

He promised cordially and began already to think Ito knew best and there was stuff in the girl. Sayoko, an old friend of his, thought the same. Hasty judgments again! How fatally easy to give an idiotic opinion! Why could he not do as Arima did, examine a newcomer mentally and physically, as a trained engineer can take his engine to bits if necessary—the newcomer knowing as little as the engine of

his dissection? And Arima had the ancient Indian art of walking straight into the subconscious mind with a searchlight of truth in his hand. It was pretty poor stuff to give an opinion until you knew your business. The girl was laughing quite healthily with Ito now.

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“I want you to beat Mr. Scott, a rattling good beating!” she said. “For the honor of the ship.”

Ito chuckled.

“So do I! Kindly tell me how. Seduce him into showing you his new lock tonight and send the ship’s cook with a note to me before breakfast.”

“Do you remember the time I asked you for your best throw and you sent me a letter beginning ‘Damned Sir,’ and told me you’d show me next day, and how you did it?” said Scott in high spirits.

“How did he?” asked Yasoma.

“Uncommonly neatly. He let me pick him up and hold him above my head. Mind you I didn’t know he was shamming and I cried in a boastish voice (to quote Kuroda), ‘Now, what about this, my friend?’ He said, ‘Now that’s just where judo comes in. The moment you throw me down I’ll kick you to death.’ And I jolly well knew he could. I’d forgotten that! So I had to make terms.”

Ito laughed like a boy.

“You were a beginner then. You have *fudoshin* now—granite imperturbability! Next day we met a man of the *rokudan*—the sixth grade. I know Scott took him by the shoulders and shook him like a rat. I sat down and fainted quietly away.”

“Sixth grade indeed! Go to blazes! It’s awfully handsome of me to give you a chance of showing off your honorably magnificent skill on a dummy.”

It was impossible for her to know whether they were kidding or in earnest, but it was

clear that Ito delighted in Scott's company. He was a changed man, and something in Yasoma a little more spirited than petulant jealousy began to raise its head and ask questions. Might she herself not find Scott a good friend if she could convince him she was worth it. Might not Ito be glad to see a wholesome friendship spring up between them? She softened every moment under Scott's good humor.

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Interest expressed itself in dead silence when the two came forward next day. This would be a big thing. Every Japanese present knew there would be more in it than a physical struggle, though very few could have said why. It had been more than whispered that these two men were masters of *hijutsu*—the secret art of which the implication is not well known in Japan, though the name is familiar—and only a few who prided themselves on unusual knowledge were talking quietly about the two-sworded men of earlier days who had been worsted by masters of *okugi* or secret tradition in some mysterious way. “But how?” asked Uchiyama of Takashima in the

crowd.

“Oh, easy enough if you understand! It was not superhuman power. Who believes in that nowadays? It was hypnotism. No more. These masters hypnotized the swordsmen, and they saw the points of a dozen swords flashing round them and didn’t know where to strike on the steel hedge. Perfectly simple when you understand. If we see anything today but good jujutsu it will be that.”

So Takashima to Uchiyama.

Yet there was a feeling of almost uneasy expectation in the air, as the umpire stood ready. There could be no *dojo* on board—no prepared room—but there was at least a portrait of the Emperor, and to this each man bowed as he took his place.

Yasoma’s eyes measured the two in their shirt-sleeves and shorts, each with his belt denoting rank in the science. Ito was a fine height for a man of his people—not an ounce overweight. His body all muscle; his

neck hiding muscle under yellowish marble, his resolute spare jaw and deep-set eyes under straight black brows were omens of victory. Knowledge as well as inclination backed him against the Englishman—an inch taller, muscular also, but with a touch of something careless and incomplete about him that did not threaten a fight to a finish. She felt a cold thrill of expectation run through her as they bowed to each other with formality though they had been laughing and talking the moment before.

The next moment the faces of the men were masks, and, warily advancing, Ito had attempted to seize Scott by the loin-throw and had failed. It would be difficult for either to display his utmost skill without injuring the other for the springless deck though covered with padded mats was a poor substitute for the matted halls of Japan resting upon springs which resist and give all the time.

What followed seemed to be swift as lightning though Yasoma realized later that she had been watching an almost miraculous

exhibition of skill for more than twenty minutes. It was the better game because both men knew and avoided the deadly locks and grips with which either could have finished the fight. But while all watched, too eager for anything but breathless interest the catastrophe came. A mat which had seemed perfectly secured slipped under Ito's foot as he advanced upon Scott. He fell, his breast and head striking an iron belt, and lay there for dead.

In a moment the silent gathering dissolved into a crowd, exclaiming, quivering with nerve-tension and confused emotion. The doctor pushed his way forward and knelt beside Scott, who was supporting the body in his arms, and hurriedly felt for the pulse, then looking sharply up waved everyone off. "Go—Go!—call the captain."

Two sailors swiftly dropped a flag to hide the group of four, and the first officer was quietly but resolutely moving everyone off.

Yasoma walked forward deadly white. Death. So that was that. Now she knew what Ito had meant to her—a center to all her dim awakening hopes, the Opener of the Gate to what she did not know but felt to be above all else. Love was not even a qualification in the whirl of her dizzy thoughts. Love between man and woman—how contemptible and little a thing it would have seemed in the immense loss which had befallen her—the universe itself whirling down some vast orbit and leaving her annihilated yet bitterly conscious of annihilation. “And I could have known—he would have told me!” The sea blue as sapphire in glittering sunshine, and she had lost her all.

The first officer passed her, hurrying. She stopped in front of him neither knowing nor caring what he would think and caught his arm in frantic appeal: “Is he dead?”

The young man stared at her in astonishment that broke up the mask of his expression into contempt at the sight of emotion he could not understand.

“We think—yes,” he answered, and went as straight on as if he had run over her and left her trampled.

That was the feeling she had—trampled by Fate. Then it was all over, and she would go back to England and dope herself into forgetfulness somehow, anyhow. But forgetfulness of what? Not Ito as a man—no—ininitely, inexpressibly more! A flame burning in strange secret places, revealing also that there were secrets in her own heart that she could never know without his help. Rage possessed her—selfish rage at her loss. She loathed Scott. Why could it not have been he who fell? She leaned on the taffrail shaking with rage. Hateful—hateful world! She would have to forget it all now.

Was it hours that went by, trampling her? Suddenly, a change! A strange shout rang through the ship. A wild vibrating cry. Two Japanese walking past her halted—struck stiff, listening. She swung round panic-stricken. Again! It seemed that the whole ship and every creature on board stood tense and

shuddering. It was the very summons of life to life. "Live! Live!" Long forgotten words flooded her mind—"Awake, thou that sleepest and arise from the dead!" From the death of the soul also. It called . . . It called her to hope. Something awoke and broke like a great wave in her soul thundering light and flame. Sight and sound confounded visibly crashed together in their eternal unity. She saw sea, sky, and ship sweep in one dizzy whirl before her eyes. A roar as if the rising sea overwhelmed all, and for the first time in her life she fainted, slipping like a dead woman from her hold on the rail.

Instantly the eyes of her soul were opened. The life she knew had fled on the wings of a dream, and one hidden within like the oak in the acorn opened its boughs and leaves. She lay in a garden. Was it the garden in the old Manor House she remembered in childhood? No—"Behold I make all things new." And yet she was no stranger. A garden beside a river making little bays and curves of exquisite beauty on its way to some immeasurable ocean. Pines stood beside it,

but loveliest among lovelinesses was a great willow arched and veiling its heart with drooping boughs shimmering over their broken picture in running water, but bare now of any leaves. No color. All the garden was spread with snow, virgin and immaculate, a few white flakes eddying down from black clouds above surcharged with weight.

A small house in the background with a wide roof carved and carried outward into points—the snow monstrous on the roofs of the Dragon King. Where had she read that? Snow on a white world, turning the hurrying river into dull yellow as it swept by. Only the pines around kept their eternal green of promise and hope, though layers of snow lay on each rigid bough. Quiet sat enthroned, lost in vision. But how strange a garden! A little stream under an arched bridge, which to playful elves would have seemed stately in its height. Tiny mossed rocks aped mountains in the grand manner that mountains use of peak, gorge, and ravine; and beneath them a pool was a vast lake to scale. Little paved paths wound here and there leading into far

distances. In comparison the plum and cherry trees were forest giants.

A Japanese garden surrounded by pine-woods. Most beautiful, but charged also with meanings profound and mysterious. She lay on her elbow by the willow and stared about her in confused happiness, like a child invited to a party who knows not what to expect but trembles with joyful anticipation. Someone must come. It must begin. Now a man in a gray kimono striped with thin black lines came winding through the paths—his figure almost gigantic in comparison with the mountains and river which had deceived her eye. He came on, huge, serene as an Egyptian pyramid seen at sunset casting a vast shadow over eternal deserts. But this shadow was blue on snow. He stopped beside her.

Quiet—quiet in the silence of the snow, in his compassionate eyes as he looked down. Quiet in the untrodden chastity of the still world lying in its marriage garment and waiting—waiting. The awful purity possessed her. Never had it seemed so fraught with hidden

meanings. The chilly air lay like a steady hand upon her brows and eyes, or she thought she might have died in the cold and quiet.

“So you came!” he said, and there was 139 silence. She sank back half buried in the soft feathered chill of snow and could not answer.

“A long way to come, but you fled like a bird to its home. Already the plum-blossoms begin to bud in the snow. Already it is spring in your heart. Look up!”

He pointed. She saw at hand a plum tree gnarled and black, yet on the knotted twigs were the pearls of budding blossom fearless of the snow filling every crook of the boughs. Beauty—the eternal victory of Beauty, before whose wandering feet all ways are made lovely. She stretched trembling hands to its purity, but the voice beside her steadied her again.

“We can neither hasten nor delay the day we have made for ourselves. But do not forget

the rules. Cut them into the steel of your mind and they will sink deeper. And these are they:

“I have no parents; I make the heaven and the earth my parents.

I have no home; I make my innermost my home.

I have no magic power; I make the Self my power.

I have no miracles; I make the righteous Law my miracle.

I have no sword; I make that state which is above and beyond reason my sword.”

“And there is more,” he added, “but that is enough now. Look up. Rejoice. This is Beauty.”

She raised herself on an elbow and looked about her. The snow was death—its cold chilled every human impulse. But the steadfast plum tree unfolded buds of pearl from its iron heart, and the patience of winter prophesied the glory of spring.

“I will remember,” she said with difficulty. “It is good.” And again the chilly softness enfolded her, and the garden flowed softly away like a river in falling flakes of whiteness—a passionless snowfall of peace.

Eons might have been a paragraph in the immensity that had passed before she opened her eyes in her own cabin, with Bridget kneeling beside her bathing her lips and brows with iced water and eau-de-cologne, and the kind little Japanese doctor watching and ordering. 140

“It iss a very long time—but she wakes now!” he said. “Leave her lying flat a few moments more, madam, and call if you need me, I am, yess, extremely bissy. There iss Mr. Ito also—you know.”

He was gone. There was no bewilderment in the eyes Yasoma opened on Bridget. She could not confuse that experience with this. She struggled to her elbow.

“He’s not dead. I know he’s not,” she said.

“Tell me how he is.”

Bridget controlled her astonishment to answer:

“Dead? Not he, my lamb. Sure it’s he’s the brave man that’ll live to fight many a battle yet. They thought he was done for, but they have him brought round now, and maybe ’twon’t be many days before he’ll be about again. I wouldn’t wonder if it gave you a turn, child of me heart. But for the Lord’s sake don’t be doing them tricks again yourself, Miss Soma! I wouldn’t be the better of seeing you fall after this—no, not if I lived to be a hundred and one. ’Tis a man’s game, all said and done!”

She accompanied this with soft touches of icy scented water on Yasoma’s face and lips. For a moment it was delicious to lie in languid enjoyment of the tenderness that hovered over her and to remember—remember. Every moment of vision was as clear-cut upon her mind and on something deeper as an inscription on a polished emerald, and she lay

revolving it and repeating the mysterious rules to herself.

“I have no parents. I make the heaven and the earth my parents.” That was the first. It called back other words she knew:

“Though I was born on earth, the
child of earth,
Yet was I fathered by the starry sky.”

141

Well—parents enough and to spare for the Great Adventure! She felt strong, life beginning to throb and vibrate in every cell of her body, and presently she could lie no longer. It was a farce to be an invalid. She wanted to be up and doing, to find Scott, to force him to hear her dream and act as interpreter if Ito was as yet beyond her reach. Die? How could he with all that work ahead and the responsibility of her life upon him? Men never die while they are needed. Never. They only pass around the corner when another is ready and better than ready to take their place. She got upon her feet and stamped one foot upon the deck to feel it

strong and steady under her. She sponged her face in Bridget's basin of icy water and shook the drops from her hair before she combed it into broken waves of darkness.

“Now, you lie down, Bridgie. You're as white as white! I gave you an awful start, I know. See, I'll ring for a cup of tea. Did you think I was dead? Did I faint for long? I wish I could do it every day if it would be like this.”

She helped Bridget remonstrating with all her might to the sofa.

“But, Miss Soma, 'tis you should rest yourself. It gave me a turn, I won't deny it—and poor Mr. Ito too—that I'd fancy the very ground he walks on! I don't know how long before you woke up. It might be a matter of ten minutes, but I thought I had you lost—so I did.”

“Well, if you had,” Yasoma said philosophically, “what about the Shining Ones and the Celestial City? I should think

any sensible Christian would like to see the gates open and their friends walk in. But perhaps you thought I'd go south instead."

Bridget shook her head in horror. Her love was an over-match for any theology, and that Yasoma should perish everlastingly was as incredible as that any Calvinistic dogma should not be divinely inspired. She reconciled her opposites with all a woman's skill. 142

"God forbid, my lamb! But I'll take a turn on my bed—if you'll do no more than go up and lay on deck. Now give me your word, honest!"

Yasoma settled her and ordered the tea and the kind little stewardess.

The ship had returned to the normal when she went on deck half an hour later, but for little groups of Japanese standing together talking eagerly. The first person she saw was Scott, leaning his arms on the rail and looking forward into the boundless blue of sea and

sky as she had seen Ito look—many years ago—for so it seemed in the light of this experience. No, she could not interrupt those thoughts. But how could she have disliked and dreaded him? What was the root of the mean nettle of jealousy which had sprung stinging in her mind? Self, and nothing better, it had vanished now into eagerness to be near him, to speak and ask the many meanings of all that crowded upon her. It was not difficult to realize that life had come to a turning and had taken a new orientation, and though it cost her a slip down into the Valley of Humiliation she would abase herself if need be and ask his help. But just now—impossible! He was communing with silence, and she could not break in.

The sun was dropping swiftly to the line of sea astern when he roused himself, turned and saw her. He came straight to her side.

“You’ll have been anxious about Ito. I heard you fainted and no wonder; it was a horrid sight. Miss Sayoko was quite knocked over too. She can’t come up this evening.”

Yasoma felt the delicacy of this shielding of her emotion and liked it, though the opinions of others had never troubled her and least of all now. Had she anything to hide?

“He’s better? Please tell me all—everything you can—I thought—”

“Yes—what?” He had been swift to notice the change in her voice and eyes. Truth flashed between them. They had met at last. Sex had vanished. Money was dross. Only beauty was left—pure loveliness. He added:

“Very much better. The doctor’s a topper. He’ll be about in a few days.”

“Yes—but—but—Everyone thought he was dead. I knew it—I thought that terrible strange cry was when he died. . . . Please tell me. If you knew—”

But how to put it into words? She wanted encouragement. She added, timidly and hesitating: “The whole ship is different

because it happened. Please tell me. What was it if not that? It struck me like a blow—it half killed me. That was why I fainted.”

Silence. She added:

“You can trust me. I’ve been a fool but you can trust me.”

He stood leaning against a stanchion, looking down with eyes that met her own as if considering, then he said:

“I’ve heard of you from Mrs. Ascham. Yes—I’ll tell you.”

Another pause; then he said slowly:

“When Ito fell I thought, the doctor thought, he was dead. His heart had stopped. He had had a terrible blow on the breast and head. I must tell it shortly—these things don’t bear much speaking of—”

“I know—I know,” she said with quick-coming breath. “Don’t if you don’t want to. I’ll wait.”

Seemingly he did not hear her. He went on uninterruptedly, looking thoughtfully at her still with those curious sea-blue eyes, so much too light for his face.

“The doctor couldn’t rouse him—nothing would do. Well—the force that sustains all the world and centers every energy they call *aiki* in Japan. It has another name in India. In the highest judo there are some men who know how to direct it in ways that have great power. One may call it a shout—we call it the *kiai*. Arima had trained me. Well—I tried it, and it roused him, and the doctor could use his remedies then. That’s the whole story.”

“Not the whole. There must be more. For when I heard it, it broke against me like a wave. It flung me down. . . . Tell me, and then—may I tell you?”

“It affects both mind and body strangely in people—some people,” he agreed gravely. “Yes, you’re right. That isn’t the whole story. It turns on deep things. *Aiki* can be used to

control one's own mind and the minds of others, and with it I drove a memory—a thought into Ito's subconscious that would bring him back from the very gates of death. A thought of Arima's garden."

Amazement overwhelmed her for a moment, then she spoke, measuring every word.

"Could it bring the same thought to others?"

"I shouldn't call it thought really. It's something much deeper, that goes into the very roots of one's being. I think it could only reach one prepared for it—so far as I know. But who can wholly understand?"

"Then may I tell you something?" she asked again. He assented with a gesture, and while she spoke looked not at her but out into the quietly falling veils of darkness, in which star after star lit its slender taper and set the eternal lights on guard in the sky.

"Whenever I've asked about Arima's garden people were silent. Eleanor Ascham

would not tell me—nor Ito, though I have got as near as I dared. And yet they might, for I have known all along in the back of my mind that Japan and Ito are only a gateway to Arima. Now, please, listen. . . . Perhaps only a dream—but I liked it.”

She told her story with the utmost simplicity and—unlike her usual way—used none of the short cuts of speech, but words which in themselves were well chosen. He felt through them awe of the whiteness of the snow, the figure larger than human, the snow-clouded distances—and felt also more, much more than Yasoma could understand at the moment. But he said nothing. No listener could be more silent until she had finished—on a strong phrase:

“It was as real as this moment. More real. And I shall wish night and day that I could be there again. No [for he made a gesture], don’t tell me it was a dream! How could I have imagined those strange rules? I never thought of such a thing in my life. I may be only fumbling after something, but I know it’s

there.”

Scott’s absorbed look dissolved into a smile at last.

“There? I should say! Of course it’s there. Yes, the *kiai* reached you. You have been in Arima’s garden. We call it the Garden of Vision. All that is best worth knowing in the world got me there. Yes—*got* me! I’ve sat under the willow tree and the house where ‘the snow is deep on the roofs of the Dragon King,’ and I’ve seen Arima come down from it through the rocks and past the little bridge. Not larger than human—no; except inwardly. I think—”

But she broke in amazed:

“I saw it! I was there! Then I’ve a right to know. Why should I be shut out any longer?”

“You have a right to know,” he agreed.

“Arima himself has opened the gate.

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Let me give you the outlines of the plan we are making now and then—if I may

—I'll tell you the experience that led me to him. And let me apologize for holding you away. You'll know later one has to watch out until one knows people.”

He told her what Ito had told Eleanor Ascham of the community of men who were studying together and on what hard strong lines. He added what many of them knew in part already—the principle of that inner power which can be demonstrated outwardly which is known in Japan under rules modified by race and language as Zen Buddhism.

“And then they'll spread through the world and teach what we believe will produce groups of men with new powers. They will be able not only to keep pace with science but to outsee it and open the way. Zen is the simplest, wisest thing in the world. A much better statement than the Indian, I think.”

“If money is wanted—” Yasoma began.

“No—no money. Blow money! It's a gospel of hard work. Too much money in the world

now. Softens the muscles and puts on fat, and its influence is fatty degeneration for giver and taker. Don't talk of that. We want men who don't care a rap for it. We have no use for your checks, but we have big use for you if you'll really work. The future is as open to women as to men, and what you've just told me proves that you've been with us for years though you didn't know it any more than I knew it when first I went into Arima's garden."

"And I have been there too," she said fearfully.

"Exactly. Now let us explain what we're after."

She sat following his talk with many thoughts very new in her experience, stripped of all her prestige of money and sex, strangely humbled and strangely content in the realization that he was talking to her now as to a brother in the faith—as he might talk to Ito.

"We've got to put it over. You'll know

one day—perhaps you know now how it takes hold of you. It's the key of the universe and of every science and philosophy. The universal law of Beauty and Power and Truth in one, and as practical as thermodynamics. And our business is to demonstrate that men can understand and work with that law through their higher consciousness, which we can show them how to reach. We offer a practical experience. Hallo!—It wants me. The purser's calling. Give me a chance tomorrow."

He put out his hand like a boy and said, "Shake!"

Long after he had left her she still was thinking. Yes, she had conquered Scott as an obstacle in her way, but it gave her no pride now. Only joy and an immense hope.

Chapter Ten

She caught Scott next morning and asked for news of Ito. Her wonderful flush of color and light was subdued into a twilight of care and weariness, and looking into her heavily clouded eyes he was touched by it. He knew how to gage the shock when the normal for the first time meets the abnormal face to face.

It really amazed him that he had been taking her for the experimentally seductive type of coquette. To-day she was wistfully simple as a tired child. . . . “Be good to me. I don’t understand my own trouble.” As far as it is possible for an Englishman he felt that in spite of the most valid excuses his judgment had been mistaken. It followed that he should say in a generous glow:

“Come and have a quack! He’s doing fine.
But I want to talk to you about Arima.”

“May we sit down? Do talk to me,” she said.
“To me everything depends upon him, and
when I thought he was dead yesterday—I—I
suffered.”

No mistaking the truth in that tone, and
Scott’s sympathy instantly shut up like an
oyster. Beauty has its disabilities. Had she
been a flat-faced wench his pity and chivalry
would have embraced her feet and beautiful
images surrounded her. Since she was what
she was, extremely disturbing ones of Ito and
the life in the hills took their place. 149

Among the difficulties foreseen by
Eleanor Ascham, who knew the world
extremely well, Yasoma’s long black lashes
and a certain quality of lingering sweetness in
her smile had played no unimportant part,
though not with regard to either Ito or Arima.
Scott therefore may be forgiven for
recognizing that a spiritual entanglement may
be twice as disastrous as any other. When the
Divine is called in to buttress an earthly

passion and another world to redress the balance of this, the great tragedies of both may be staged. This must be taken in hand!

How about explaining with the utmost delicacy that the Japanese scheme of things entirely excluded sexual sentiment except in situations which could not possibly be discussed? After hurried reflection he spoke with nonchalance which even to himself sounded entirely unnatural.

“One does feel these things strongly, but it offends every idea of these people’s if one shows it. They are by way of being stoics, so far as expression goes, and even further.”

She stared at him. “Do you mean Mr. Ito would be offended if I said I were sorry?”

He floundered: “Of course that depends on how you said it. But on the surface they are unemotional people. I have lived there and—oh, well!—they don’t approve of love even in marriage. Speaking nationally, I mean.”

Her eyes, gray as Pallas Athene's, widened upon him.

“Then where on earth do they approve of it?”

“Oh, parents, children, country—that kind of thing!” He felt himself an idiot.

“Well, thank God, I know nothing about it,” said Yasoma, “but I *should* have thought that if ever a pill needed jam it was marriage and that that accounted for Nature's shabby little trick of love. It's amazing that a nation exists sensible enough to say, ‘No, you don't!’ to her. But how do they manage? Does the man say, ‘I lay my abhorrence at your feet,’ and she answer, ‘My whole hatred is yours!’—and then do they live happily ever after?”

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Her shrewd wit began to be conscious that some motive lay behind this sociology, and the impression of yesterday's awe was wearing thin and evaporating in an irritating little headache. She had come prepared for a passionate uplift, and Scott was clearly what

she called getting at her. He said with persistent politeness that she misunderstood him.

“The Japanese take marriage as the foundation of the state—” he began, and she retorted:

“No wonder they’re used to earthquakes!”

With impressive disregard for this ribaldry he went on doing his best to wreck every chance of friendship:

“And so love takes a back seat in comparison with family, money—all the spider-web of things connected with marriage; and a Japanese could no more believe a woman had fallen in love with him with an idea of marriage—” He halted for an illustration.

“Did anyone ever try? They are said to be intelligent!”

Scott was getting angry. “At least he would think of it with disgust.”

There was a pause. Yasoma said reflectively:

“Disgust! I knew they never kissed each other. They certainly have a start in the race for heaven, haven’t they? What a privilege to see a country with that kind of Volstead Law! It must be dry, in all conscience!”

He persisted crossly: “You’re taking me all wrong. Think it over, and you’ll see there’s something in it.”

“But why should *I* think it over?”

“As a point of interest. It makes the give and take between men and women entirely unemotional in Japan and—”

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“Except when they hurl a teacup at each other’s heads. Don’t tell me the poor souls haven’t that outlet! I can’t go and see their mute agony!”

She saw exactly what he was driving at, and delight surmounted wrath and broke out in a great ringing laugh. She looked at him with

dancing eyes, and a longing to put an impish thumb to her nose.

“Now for plain but handsome English! All this is a morality against my going soupy over Ito, and precious badly you did it! Well, I’m not going soupy over *anybody*—not even you! I’m as dry as a biscuit. And next time you tell that story ask yourself first—‘What about the geisha?’”

Her humor, with the upward flash of black lashes, had saved the situation, and Scott could hardly apologize for laughing. Neither doubt nor fear ever recurred to his mind. From Yasoma’s neither doubt nor fear was ever after wholly absent. Why had she so suffered? Why had Scott thought as he had? But suddenly her gaiety collapsed and fell. Love!—a bitter memory and a bitter word for her to use or hear.

“Let’s talk about jujutsu,” she said. “You know a lot. And first tell me exactly what Mr. Ito has done. He never talks about himself.”

Scott was now unfeignedly pleased that she should ask.

“If he had gone out—” he said—the book she was carrying dropped and she had to stoop for it—“Well—it would have been a cruel thing for the work. He and Arima are a kind of brothers, for Arima’s brother married his sister and Sayoko is niece to both. He has written two wonderful books—‘The Formless World’ and ‘The Relation of Buddhist Philosophy to Modern Science.’”

“Can I get them?”

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“Japanese. We’re beginning to translate the last. Then, all the men go through his hands. Wait until you see him at work! You’ll wonder how he has time to put it over. It was the same in London, but nobody knew. He had money too, but he pools that for the work.”

He certainly could not know that every word he uttered was an incentive to her to make herself guard, shield, and sword to Ito if he

could be made to need her. Often she had wondered idly over her advantages—so useless, for what on earth could one do with them except go on existing? Swiftness in languages, interest that like an elephant's trunk picked up everything with perfect indiscrimination, money, the power of leading—London would swear to that!—a fine rag-bag of general knowledge and reading—who could give what she could? She knew enough now. She had her clue, and Scott, realizing nothing, was delighted when she said gravely:

“You'll see I shall pull my own weight. I'm so glad you told me. And now about Arima sama—did he teach you jujutsu?”

“Certainly, and a lot more with it. But jujutsu is a splendid beginning. He taught me a lot of things. One—how to dismiss pain from the body. Have you seen that? The mind must be in perfect control. Here's an example. The absurdest thing, but it's true. He asked me to sit on the ground and face him; then to catch him by the ears and haul as hard as I could.

Well, I'm not a weakling—I did my best; and I could neither budge him an inch nor hurt him. He was laughing at me all the time. The next minute he leaned back and dragged me after him though I gripped on for all I was worth. We sat in the same way directly after, and he bid me put my hands against his breast and thrust with all my force. Again—the same. I couldn't move him a hair's breadth. He laid—*laid!*—a finger on my breast, and I went straight over.”

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“But that isn't jujutsu!” she interrupted eagerly. “That's magic—or trickery.”

“Not a bit of it. Jujutsu is the way to it; one way, and the best, I think. You can imagine I was as keen as mustard. He made me bend his fingers back until I was frightened myself to do it. They should have snapped. I say truly I could not believe any hand could stand it. Then he lifted his left hand in the air and said, ‘Your strength is gone.’ It was gone. I was weak as a child. I have seen Arima drag myself and another man as big and strong as I round the room by a sash thrown round his

neck of which we held the ends, and I swear we struggled for all we were worth. He took us as if we were children playing at horses. I saw him do the same by one of the *sumotori*—the huge professional wrestlers you see in Japan. That man turned the scale at three hundred pounds. Arima's exact weight was one hundred and forty."

She was listening in the most profound silence and interest. Did Scott know—had Ito instructed him that the way to catch her interest was on the sporting side? She asked herself that question but dismissed it. No, the whole thing was a road to a certain end. He went on:

"But after a good many of these exercises he asked me whether I should like to go through the experience of being strangled. I was quite clear that I shouldn't, until he explained that it wasn't an uncommon thing in the schools anyhow and that at certain grades of jujutsu it was almost a matter of course. Well, to make a long story short, that put it upon a kind of footing where I couldn't refuse. At least I felt

it that way when he said he had undergone it himself, times out of mind. You know, Arima's the kind of man you believe though he scarcely speaks at all and never argues. You'll find that when you know him. So when we were at judo one day I asked for it. I own I was in a blue funk but—I asked. Now listen! He took a good hold on the collar of my loose shirt, tightened it against the hollow below the Adam's apple of my throat, gave it a twist with his left and I was off. Now I want to say that at first I just felt what I always had heard is the result of strangling. Then came an experience I won't describe. You felt it yourself when you heard the *kiai* cry. Well, it was an amazing business. You see, when you throw the everyday self aside you get down to the subconscious, and then the fun starts, especially if you've been leading up to it. The thing that brought me back was the *kiai*. So far as I was concerned I was dead. I even think I had the first taste of the other side. Then—”

“Wait a minute!” she said quickly. “I'm more

interested than I ever was in my life. Something has come into my head that I want to tell you. Don't go till I come back."

She rushed to her cabin where Bridget sat drinking innumerable tiny cups of pale green tea with the little stewardess, who almost prostrated herself in profound bows. But Yasoma scarcely saw her.

"Bridgie, you know the Bible and I don't. What happened when Lazarus died and Christ raised him from the dead?"

Bridget, bewildered, but never nonplused on her own ground, rose at once to the occasion.

"Lord bless you, Miss Soma, you don't mean to say you've forgot the blessed words I read you so often? Sure the good Lord went and He stood by the grave and what it says is that 'He cried with a loud voice: "Lazarus, come forth.'" What else would He say and Him the Lord of Life? And the man came out the way he went in—only alive!"

But Yasoma had no comment to make.

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She went on eagerly:

“And wasn’t there a city in the Old Testament where the walls fell down when the people shouted? Tell me what happened!”

“Why, just that. And what’s got in your head, Miss Soma, the Lord knows, but if you take to your Bible ’twill be the bright day! ’Twas Joshua told the people if they wanted the walls to fall down before them to give a great big shout all together. And down went them walls like a child’s bricks. But what in the name—”

Yasoma was gone almost before she finished. She was terrified lest Scott should escape her before getting to the point she dimly—very dimly perceived. But he was waiting, looking out over the sea with that air of calm content and self-containedness which angered her in him and in Ito because she could not share it.

“Go on. I’ll tell you presently,” she said, answering the question with which he turned

to her.

“Well—I came round none the worse and found myself in the room we always used, and Arima was sitting by me. There’s another way of bringing one back, but he had used the cry you heard me use: and there and then I had my first lesson in the drill which gives it the power it has in that and other ways.”

“Tell me about it, please—I want to know before I tell you something.”

“I wish you’d wait for Ito or Arima. Let me say as little as I can for fear of spoiling a big thing. I’m a mug at explaining. The physical training for it is deep breathing, plain food, exactly what has been taught in India for thousands of years. The inward training is the power of fixed mental and spiritual concentration. They use *aiki*, as they call it in Japan—*akasha* in India. *Kiai*—you note it’s the same word backward—is a practical application of the whole thing. It certainly has to do with vibration. You get into the same vibration with a person or animal, and

then if you're stronger you can do what you want. It shakes up the pattern of the electrons into some new pattern chosen by yourself. At least that's what *I* think. But ask Ito. I'm not as strong as he is in that way if it were a trial of strength, but yesterday his physical forces were dead and I could get in. I've seen Arima kill birds at a distance with that shout—or so it seemed—and then revive them with it. Even what we call inanimate things. A great vibrating voice can shatter the window-panes in a shut room. We don't yet know all a tone-pitch setting up the right vibrations can do. When science gets there—at present she's busier with results than causes—she'll find the men we're training ready to help.”

There was a moment's silence. Then she said proudly:

“Now I'll tell you *my* discovery. The moment you told me about Ito I thought of Lazarus, and I flew down to my nurse—she was my nurse—and asked her what happened. She knows the Bible and the ‘Pilgrim's Progress’ by heart. Well—she said Christ cried with a

loud voice—‘Lazarus, come forth.’ I believe that was the *kiai*. Wasn’t it? And then Jericho. ‘The people all shouted together.’ Was that vibration? I never even dreamed a miracle could be true. But really—”

He shook his head:

“A miracle can’t be true. There are no miracles. If there were, the whole universe would crumble, for the universe is law. But there are things which don’t often happen and laws we don’t understand, and *aiki* is one of them. You’re perfectly right about the Bible. There are lots of such things in it. One of the finest books in the world for blazing a trail for men of science. Arima will show you a book he has made of such instances from all the scriptures of all the world. Those two you name are in it. Always the cry—the summons. I’m going to India to get their point of view. They started it.”

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A little disappointed of the laurels of the discovery she still asked with good courage: “Can I learn?”

“I don’t know. But you can be tested. And now do you mind if I go down to Ito? I promised.”

“Tell him I’m so sorry—and I do want him to get better.”

She spoke with most reassuring frankness.

“I’ll tell him that!” he said, and went off leaving her with much to consider. Little Sayoko came softly and curled up beside her. She had heard some of what had been said.

“You are sad, Soma sama, but why? These are the things we shall learn in Arima sama’s garden, and they make me content. You also?”

Yasoma mused: “I think you and I want different things. You want peace and I want power. Can Arima sama give us what we want? For I know what I shall ask for.”

“He can give us what we can take. I think no one can do more.”

They sat silent afterward, watching the glittering network of sunlight on the ocean. Impossible to believe it could rise in fury when scourged by the wild monsoon. Now, birds of calm sat brooding on the charmed wave, and the ocean was eternity drowning all griefs in its depths and timelessly reflecting the central sun.

That night Yasoma wrote to Eleanor the story of the day before and ended:

“I don’t know yet to what fate you have committed me. It may be to a hopeless longing for something I can never reach—never. And if so, shall I be able to forgive you? Or it may be something so wonderful that I can’t understand even the beginning of it. I can only feel it as one feels warmth or cold in the air. And, if it turns out that way, shall I be able to thank you? But I own that when I thought Ito was dead my heart stopped—I think, literally. Not for love’s sake—you know me better than that. I know nothing about love. But I think that at its worst it is lust. At its best only a little

stage in life, a wayside inn that one stops at for a night—and outside are the endless journey and all the big things. In my old days in London I thought even the money game or the ambition game would be more amusing and, though I don't think that now, I believe I was on the right track. Forgive this babble; it's to introduce the fact that you pushed me off the deep end when you sent me here, and though I haven't drowned it's only Ito's help that keeps me afloat. So how could I spare him? Now I hear he is a great writer and a big noise in Japan among the people who know. Did you know? If so, why not tell me? It might have saved me a lot. But I don't blame you. I was too great a fool to learn in any way but the one. Don't be bored with your patient's symptoms. You started the disease." That was not true, but it would not mislead Eleanor. It rounded a period, at all events.

She did not stay on the deck that night after dinner but sat in her cabin reading in a book Ito had lent her, translated by himself into English and called "The Samurai Magic of Japan."

“I wrote it years ago when my knowledge was smaller than now,” he had said. “But some of it was my gateway and it may be yours. Therefore, read if you will.”

She read, and with fascination, of the wondrous occult side of Japan which many know so little and others studiously ignore. Bridget watched her with some anxiety. So much of the girl she had known was disappearing, so strange was the woman slowly forming in the rough marble, perhaps to step out later in loveliness. Not that 159 Bridget put it in that way. It was enough for her to marvel whether that mysterious wind of the spirit which she called “the grace of God” had blown away the dust and ashes and left fair soil in which the flowers of Paradise might blossom. But if instead Apollyon himself were to plow and sow red seed of ruin, still Yasoma would be her child, the dearest thing on earth. For love of that brand, Yasoma had none of the contempt she expressed to Eleanor for the sexual love which has captured poets and playwrights and novelists since the world

began. That it will always so hold them may be doubted. The world is awaking from its adolescence, and wider horizons open even for the sexual instincts.

Two nights later Ito was able to lie in a long chair propped with pillows, in the balmy night air on deck—the ship a fairyland illuminated with swaying lanterns and garlands.

“But no one must talk to him,” the doctor said, warning friends off. “See how he is white still! No—no talk. Only see.”

His eyes fixed on Yasoma as she came on deck and stepped, a figure of flaming gold, into the lantern light flashing colored rays from the rhinestones and imitation gems that embroidered her long coat. In her hair she wore the jeweled band, the swaying curving diamond feathers that arched and swayed about her head like a glittering halo. Her beauty must always be noticeable but in that barbaric splendor it was arresting. She struck a silence before her. People crowded into

groups to watch but not to criticize. Words could not express the strange thoughts that stirred in Ito's tired mind as he lay and looked. That was the Russian dress he had resented in London. He remembered it with a pang as a man remembers a blazing day in July with its heat and weariness. And he had never believed she would wear it now. 160

Its garish splendor cried out against the great presences of sea and sky. How could a woman who thought of Arima's garden as a heaven of peace flaunt like a harlot in gems that would buy bread for thousands of patient souls? How could she be in earnest if she did this?

She turned towards him and waved her hand, cautioned to do no more, but with a look where, to Ito's piercing eyes, Love and his sister Sorrow sat together. One moment she paused and went on to where Scott in kimono and obi stood laughing with a number of Japanese about him. The talk stopped as she came up casting rays of gold and colored light about her. No one of them had seen such a sight before, and half the passengers

collected while she waited laughing and Scott gave them a few points on Russian life in the days of Ivan the Terrible, how Yasoma's lord would have shone like some northern war-god on his dun war-horse covered from head to tail with golden and copper chains inset with jewels and fringed with copper bells; he himself in black steel shirt of mail bordered with copper on sleeves and edge, his fierce and haughty face half hidden in a high helmet of copper and black enamel crested with jewels.

“A great Daimyo!” said Sayoko. “I wish he were here this night for us to see such splendors? Even in Japan this beauty is gone.”

“Then I hope his glories would be real—mine aren't!” said Yasoma, laughing on an impulse. “None of these jewels are real. I think it's silly to waste money on real stones just for a dress. Don't you all think so?”

But there was a doubtful silence. Should a great rich lady not have the reality of

everything? The Japanese mind craves the beauty of reality in all artistry. The thing worn unseen must be more exquisite than that which all the world sees. Sayoko had shown Yasoma the tiny hidden clasp uniting the strings of her sash—a miracle in miniature of a golden crane on an all but black background; that, and the lining of her *haori*, scarcely ever visible but lovely—a snow-storm on bamboos, done in black and gray upon white silk by a great artist. Only when she was alone did she spread it out and lose herself in beauty. To her, to all present except Scott, the Russian dress lost all interest except as an historical illustration; for if it was not real, then it was nothing and certainly tawdry. Yasoma “lost face” a little. Incomprehensible English! But her clear voice had reached Ito, and he relaxed on his pillows.

“My fair sun, my ermine, my falcon!”—how well he remembered the words. Yes, there was as much of the falcon in Yasoma, in her frankness and outspokenness. And to him, naturally including them in her dress, the

glitter of the diamond swaying feathers was no longer hateful. He had heard some careless word of Eleanor Ascham's of the extravagance of those feathers and now, behold, that was a mistake. She cared no more to outspend the rest of the world. The money cloud was lifting. If it vanished under the discipline that she was accepting she would indeed be ermine-white. "My fair sun!"—light-giving, light-receiving, from all the lights of the world.

So perfected he held her fast in his thought, knowing that thus are sent waves and vibrations of strength upward along the Way of Power. And Scott, catching his eyes dwelling upon her and partly reading the meaning, said to the girl:

"I think you might speak to him for—say—five minutes. Would you like to?"

"Certainly I should."

But immediately she was on guard. She too remembered the first time he had seen

that dress and the unspoken condemnation, and a pang of most bitter memory shot through her which reacted instantly in sharp self-defense. Why had she worn it and believed for a moment that she could face him? Suppose he remembered—but of course he never would. Scott and the others were standing by, and she went up with as natural an air as possible, hoping that the glitter of her rings would not betray the shaking pulses in her clasped hands.

“May I tell you how sorry I was? More sorry than I can say.”

“Bowling and beginning to speak,” he answered, smiling and using a Japanese formula he had taught her for the beginning of a letter. He continued in the simple Japanese she could understand.

“I thank your honorable condescension. But I myself was not sorry. It was good. And now I am glad to have heard you say you care no more for costly jewels. Do you know I remember very well that dress and the

evening I saw you wear it! An evening which was not happy for we were not then friends. Now you will pardon if I say, ‘I like the dress of my friend.’”

She turned pale as death. No words could have more innocently and more cruelly wounded her. Memories, torturing memories—and how was she to speak? She answered in English and with a kind of bitter anger which he felt and wholly failed to understand.

“Oh yes, this dress suits me down to the ground! I ought to wear it always, don’t you think? So refined and unassuming! As to diamonds, I adore them, and these happen to be real.”

She stood up immediately, avoiding his look of startled amazement. He knew he had made some wounding mistake but understood nothing.

“But I mustn’t talk to you. Don’t think I’m not working at my Japanese, Mr. Ito. I’m talking and reading every day. I

mean to do you credit *there*, anyhow!”

He made a polite gesture and said good night in Japanese as she turned away, taking up the rôle of the teacher as she had indicated it.

Scott sat down in her empty seat, and a few minutes later when he had had time to admire the pretty scene of fluttering light and ribbons and flowers Ito was helped down to his cabin.

The evening went on, and before it was over Yasoma slipped away from the rest and down to a lower deck—now quite deserted.

Excepting Ito and Scott all the passengers were on the upper deck. Thirsting for quiet and darkness she found a corner astern and stood to watch the ship gliding through the milky fire of phosphorescence which almost extinguished the star-paths of the greater planets on the sea. Light above, piercing the dark; light below, flooding the lonely ocean, but no light in her own heart—stubbornness that expelled friendship, petty pride darting its sting in foolish self-defense. For a bitter moment she saw the pettiness and ignorance which he must see in her—he who knew all

loveliness while she knew nothing. His voice—she loved the very sound of it! His eyes would not let her be. All that Scott had told her rankled and stung and set them apart.

“He doesn’t care for me even as a learner, and how could he?” she thought. “What shall I do if they won’t let me go to Naniwa? I’ve slipped down between two worlds—the old one broken to bits and the new not materialized. I’m like a fish trying to live on land. Damn these things!”

A swaying feather had struck her cheek as she turned, and sudden rage possessed her—a wild impulse to be rid of them and all the hateful memories. It was as though Maxwell stood beside her and held out his arms and, recoiling, she spat in his face. She dragged the band of diamonds from her hair, and the flexible diamond feathers swayed in her hand. Then, leaning over, she dropped band and feathers into the sea and saw their fire meet the white sea-fire and vanish. To be rid of that past! With feverish hands she unbelted the coat and bundling it

up flung it after the other, standing white in the satin dress beneath. That had no memories. But if Maxwell had approached her at that moment she would have leaped to freedom from the shame she had made for herself.

For a moment that very thought stirred in her brain. Then turning she went swiftly to her cabin, meeting no one on the way.

Bridget stood up rigid with consternation.

“Miss Soma dear—your lovely feathers—your coat? Will I run up for them?”

“If you say anything I shall go mad. They fell overboard. I was leaning over—”

Bridget cried out in horror.

“And sure they wouldn’t float or they could stop the ship for them. Lord bless us!—And the pride of my heart, that belonged to your mama and the family—”

“Let it alone. I do what I choose.”

She stood stiffly, black as a thundercloud, her mouth working, her hands clenched on each other. For a moment Bridget thought it was a rage-royal and shrank away in real terror. Suddenly she understood. A spiritual battle was being fought under her very eyes. It was impossible for her to recognize the enemy, but she who had climbed the Hill Difficulty and threaded the Valley of Humiliation could feel if she could not understand. She sat, looking down, her lips moving silently, and some minutes went by.

Yasoma relaxed with a long shuddering sigh. Presently she came and knelt before Bridget, laying her head on her arms crossed in Bridget's lap.

“Let me be still awhile and then I'll go to bed. I'm dead beat, Bridgie, dead beat. Everything will be all right tomorrow.”

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She knew that her past life had flashed into the deep with the diamonds and was gone forever. But its bitterness would remain.

As Ito lay in his berth he and Scott had not spoken of Yasoma. In that sort of silence the Japanese gentleman is at one with his Western brother. But after a few moments he said:

“Read me something, my friend, that I may rest.” And Scott, well understanding his desire, opened a book and read passages here and there at random from Eddington’s “Nature of the Physical World.”

Presently he came upon one which stirred Ito’s quiet; he turned on his pillow.

“In the scientific world the conception of substance is wholly lacking, and that which most nearly replaces it viz., electric charge—is not exalted as star-performer above the other entities of physics. . . . To put the conclusion crudely—the stuff of the world is mind-stuff. . . . We may think of its nature as not altogether foreign to the feelings in our consciousness. Recognizing that the physical world is entirely abstract and without actuality apart from its linkage to

consciousness, we restore consciousness to the fundamental position. This is not merely a philosophic doctrine but has become part of the scientific attitude of the day.”

Ito laid his hand over the page.

“That is the latest pronouncement of European science. There is neither form nor substance in the universe, and the forms and solidities we see are created by our own consciousness acting through our own senses. We are the creators of the world as it appears to us. Now, look here, Scott—turn up the outline of Buddhist doctrine prepared by several Buddhist communities and published in Tokyo thirty-five years ago. Remember too that this was openly taught in China in the sixth century and far earlier in India. Now read.” Scott began:

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“The apparent phenomena round us are produced by mental operations within us and thus distinctions are established. There is nothing that has any reality. As all things have no constant nature of their own, so there

is no actuality in rough and fine, large and small, far and near. All things in the universe are Mind itself. So we say there exists nothing but Mind.”

Again Ito laid his hand over the book, saying:

“Remember the most noble of any verses—

“I am not to be perceived by means of any
visible form,

Nor sought after by means of any audible
sound.

Whosoever walks in the way of
wickedness

Cannot perceive the blessedness of the
Lord Buddha.’

“In Him is every law intelligibly comprehended—for He is simply a condition of Mind and such also is the universe, as we Buddhists were taught from the beginning.”

Scott stood up.

“And if our consciousness which is a part of

the universal consciousness has evolved the moral law, isn't it up to us to prove that the universal consciousness makes for a perfection beyond all good or evil? And men have been bumbling at this all the time and calling it religion."

"That will not be difficult. But now—let us send a vision of Arima's garden to whoever needs it most in this ship."

They united their forces, and then Scott sat reading for a while until he saw that Ito slept, his face no calmer in sleep than in waking, the black brows like ebony on ivory. A stern beauty of peace like a sleeping knight with the conflict before him. A sense of vast serenity and security possessed the watcher also. Even the remembrance of Yasoma, proud, willing to wound, did not disturb it.

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It was long before she slept, for the gaiety on deck was insistent, but when it ceased sleep came and led her by the hand straight into Arima's garden.

Snow, snow in chilly purity covering all and chilling her bare feet to the bone. She shuddered as she went, but light shone from a little paper-covered window in the house, and presently a hand pushed the sliding panel back. She looked in to see a man seated on the floor after the manner of his countrymen but with hands folded, lost in most profound meditation, too deep for any ray to rise from the Innermost Light to his face. That was set and calm as a mask, with eyes that looked through and past her to the eternal stars. An agony of—no, not envy—of yearning to the same goal possessed her. She sank slowly on her knees in the snowdrift, and the drowsy chill invaded her heart, so it seemed, and swept her beyond vision into the solitude of utter rest. When she woke she could remember his face—and, above all, Quiet. A strange sequel to a stormy night.

Strange indeed. Something had clutched her, and in spite of all her struggles and the frantic little busynesses of her brain would never loose her again. It drew her steadily, as the smooth revolving wheels of a mighty engine

with uses far beyond his knowledge draw
some terrified wanderer within their orbit.
She feared very greatly, knowing that the
moment for resistance was past.

Chapter Eleven

She finished her letter to Eleanor next day in readiness for Singapore with the story of Ito's accident and recovery.

“It all left me with a curious sense of conviction. I could have fought the things these men believe if it hadn't been that in every fresh thing they put out, whether in physics or psychics, I get the root of exactly what the biggest men in the West are teaching now. I read their books—for I have a few with me—and then Ito or Scott turns up some marvelous old Indian or Chinese scripture, and there is the same thing, only put from the metaphysical or philosophic side—and uncommonly well put too. Even if it didn't bear on life it would interest me, for I was

born with that kind of mind. They used to say that my Very Great Grandmother came from a family which had produced all sorts of sages—which I take to mean philosophers—so there you are!

“But it *does* bear on life. It bears on it uncommonly. I am feeling and finding the connections every day. My real difficulty is how to get through to the Great Experience these people talk of—how to see through all these stained-glass windows of our senses, which make such lovely colors, to the bare white truth of things as they really are. How did they? Do you? For if all this is really true, what else matters? And if it is not true, what does anything matter? I used to think that, on the Western showing, things never logically mattered at all. The thinkers on these points were all empirics. But to hear Asia on the subject is a very different pair of shoes!

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“That brings me to another thing. Why don’t more people write about this big stuff—novels, for choice? In the library here—and

I've seen worse—every book is either sex amblings or a detective story. The detectives are easy winners. The other is exactly what Meredith calls it in 'Richard Feverel,' a Diversion on a Penny Whistle. A little of a penny whistle goes quite a way, especially when all the world is music outside the stuffy little booth. For the world is changing—changing, and the universe is keeping it company while these people paddle about in the slush.

“Oh, I know all the talk about morals and bad art the minute there's a meaning in anything—the fetish-photography of the twentieth century! But if these books are so damned dull that they drive all the world to take to cross-word puzzles and detective stuff, which is the same thing, it doesn't seem as if they need be over-anxious about their art.

'Obscenity Sauce,' as Mrs. Marrable calls it is quite as monotonous as bread and milk in the long run. Who is it who says, 'The flesh has only one voice, but the soul, the intellect, the brain, have a thousand'? Isn't that as true as taxes?

“Do you know, Eleanor, I believe the Orientals are gorgeously right in tethering the average woman. They never tethered the exceptional one. Nobody could. You used to say this and I could have killed you, but it’s true. We should do the same, especially as we haven’t enough exceptional women to do any real damage. But, if we don’t look out, the average woman is going to smash Western civilization and then revert to hysterics. The average man has been doing his bit at the game and with Sister Susie to help him he won’t take too long. After all it takes more than the average man to run the world nowadays. Here’s a quotation from a letter that reached me in Colombo from one of our far-flung lands.

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“I went to a social-political gathering last week. Little did I imagine the men who run us until I saw them lined up, ignorant of the common usages, some already too full of spirits to behave decently and others intent on filling up with that refreshment to the exclusion of any other idea. I did not hear a sensible word. They were smiling all over

with the pleasure their little position gives them and as slippery as eels for fear anything might be mentioned relating to the session. Selfishness and greed riding for a fall.’

“About time for the Superman, isn’t it? Well, a thunderstorm is working up, growling nearer and nearer. I must stop. Lightning will probably finish the blasphemer. Besides you may think it a case of bats in the belfry. But you won’t.”

She finished her letter and went on deck. The first people she saw were Ito and Scott sitting together, and a headlong impulse laid hold of her and abducted her wits in its flight. How or why she did it she never could explain to herself afterwards, but she marched straight up to them in a passion of confession that had all the glow of the finest self-sacrifice though not its common sense.

“I was rude and foolish last night. Those diamond feathers have dazzled my eyes more than once, and I thought it best to get rid of them. I threw them overboard.”

She passed on without a word more or a glance at either to see their astonishment—if indeed they cared enough to be astonished—and so sat down a long way off and buried herself in a book she did not read, congratulating herself on her courage. Presently Sayoko crept up beside her and sitting on the deck leaned against her chair.

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“Do you know, Soma sama, that there will be a *Nō* play this evening? They had to wait until my honorable uncle was better, but he talked today with Kimura sama and his actors, and it was prepared some time ago. It will be beautiful.”

“But all in Japanese,” Yasoma said fretfully.
“And that’s no use to me.”

“Great use, because they act beautifully and it is most good of them to act here where they have none of the things they want. Never before was it in a ship. We are so grateful we could bow to them all day long.”

“What is it all about, though? Do tell me or I

shan't go to see it.”

Sayoko's eyes dropped at a remark which seemed to her the extreme of discourtesy, but she answered bravely:

“That would be your loss, Soma sama. But ask Scott sama to tell you, or my uncle. For me it is too hard. The play is about a great Japanese lady of nearly a thousand years ago. She made a long story about a beautiful prince called Genji. She was the Lady Murasaki, and the play is of her.”

Yasoma was alert and transfigured into eagerness in a moment.

“But I know it. I know every word. It was beautifully translated—I read it over and over. Oh, I shall love that play! Every word of the book is a poem—”

She stopped a second and quoted:

“Who knows in winter if he shall see the spring? Wait not for blossom but take the

budding spray and—’ I forget the rest, but, oh, what gorgeous luck! Can’t you tell me more?”

“No—not I. The play is not like the novel. *Nō* plays are not so. Ask Scott sama—or my uncle.”

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Yasoma looked at them, shy as a schoolgirl, half hoping she had deserved a word of praise, half frightened of blame. Of course they would take what she had said very seriously one way or the other. Perhaps it would be better to wait until they came to her. But Sayoko and her own eagerness conquered, and she took the risk. Ito bowed smiling; Scott rose and dragged a chair up. And then there was an uncomfortable moment’s silence during which it struck her with horror that they were awaiting with alarm some new and sensational revelation. She dashed into hasty speech, coloring to her very brows.

“I’ve come to beg you both to tell me about the *Nō* play, because my Japanese won’t

carry me to those heights. You'll forgive my bothering you when I tell you I can say a lot of the Genji story by heart."

"A beautiful translation," Ito said warmly. "But of course the play is from a wholly different point of view and has nothing to do with Prince Genji. We know that in many ways the lady who wrote it—Murasaki—had a sad and disappointed life. Perhaps she was ambitious. Perhaps she did not understand. But the play is of her—after her death."

"After her death?"

"Yes—a true Buddhist play. It supposes that all her unsatisfied desires still cling to earth, still hold her as though her garments were caught in a snare, and so she cannot pass away into the Peace. The play does not say it, but certainly she must be reborn again and again until she reaches the true knowledge and all desire dies in her except the desire of attainment. You must ask Scott sama about the scene of the play . . . a beautiful place near Kyoto."

She turned to Scott.

“You won’t see that reproduced!” he said. “There’s no scenery in the *Nō* plays. Your imagination must do the work. It’s called ‘The Lady of Ishiyama,’ because there’s a tradition which may or may not be true that she wrote ‘Genji’ at the Temple of Ishiyama. A wonderful place with great shouldering rocks and wide spaces and that feeling of China and Japan which Nature has achieved for herself by studying the great Chinese and Japanese artists! Wonderful! One of the things I live for is to see Lake Biwa and all its surroundings again before I go off into the blue.”

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“And I must go too. I love that book. Shall I like the play? May I sit near you both and be told what it means?”

They were both as undisturbed and kindly as if throwing diamonds overboard were a daily event in their lives. There was not a ripple of remembrance. She put that point aside to be considered later.

“To be short,” said Ito, “the story is that a Buddhist monk is going towards Ishiyama. He meets an old woman on the way and cannot know it is the spirit of Lady Murasaki until her pride and anger break out in a flame. Ghosts so often walk in our *Nō* plays, but not clanking wailing ghosts as in the West. We know in Japan that a desire is as real as any other form of energy and often more powerful than any. So we do not need to arm our ghosts with steel or fear. But it takes a strong kind of—shall I call it magic?—to shake their longing into a new pattern and give them light.”

“Of course you’ve got to understand it,” said Scott. “I’ll tell you what I’ll do—Ito shall translate it and I’ll write it out this afternoon. Then come along and sit with us. Eh? We’ll put you wise.”

They had been perfectly kind, but all the same when she got back to her chair she knew there would be no more confessions. It was in the air that they considered her diamonds her own concern

and that neither desired the office of her father-confessor. That did not exist in their scheme of things, and she was well aware that she had astonished them unpleasantly. She remembered with deep discomfort a saying of Eleanor's that of all faiths Buddhism was the least sentimental and that Zen regarded sentiment as a symptom of mental weakening. What on earth could it matter to any human being if a foolish woman knew nothing better to do with diamonds than to throw them away? And in any case why must she be prattling about it? She could only repeat "Never again!" and reflect that in any decent society the chief point of breeding is to forget oneself and furnish as little unconscious humor to others as possible.

It would have been impossible that a *Nō* play should be presented on board except in very unusual circumstances. Kimura was one of the great authorities on the *Nō*, and his small troupe famous, but certainly even the entreaties of the Japanese, to whom a *Nō* play was a religion and a rite never to be missed,

would not have been a reason for yielding. It was the almost passionate wish of Ito which had turned the scale for Kimura, who, besides being a practical mystic of the sort perhaps oftener met in Japan than elsewhere, was an old friend of his; and the deep understanding between them moved him to snatch at the chance of pleasing him. The sailors caught the spirit of the thing, and the plain canvas background with a painted pine tree, which was the only scenery, was perfect in feeling as was the little approach to the stage (which should have been the raised “flower path”) decorated with three dwarfed pine-trees in pots. All was grave and archaic and true to purpose. Why not? Not only had Kimura directed them, but the potential artist lies hidden in these people. They knew, with a delicate undeceivable instinct. The languors of the tropic night were forgotten, and upon deck was twilight in old Japan brooding over a long road that led into the mysteries of the spirit.

Not all the Japanese passengers were present, and Yasoma and Scott were the only

Europeans, if indeed that terse label fitted her—a thing she almost doubted now. She sat between Ito and Scott, and her heart beat quicker with awed expectation. The atmosphere invited it by its perfect silence and—strange word!—reverence. Reverence—and a mere play? Why?

Six musicians with hand-drums, a big drum, and a flute seated themselves silently at one side of the stage and remained motionless. A chorus of six men entered also and were seated. The lights were dim.

“All the actors are men!” said Ito in a low voice. “It is twilight, very shadowy, because the road runs between the pine trees from Lake Biwa to the Temple of Ishiyama among the rocks. Now comes a Buddhist monk who is journeying alone—and he speaks. Read what he says. Scott sama has written it for you. But there will be much miming and dancing.”

She had only time to look up gratefully as he laid a manuscript on her knee and took up his

utai-bon or chant book. A monk, wearing a beautiful old wooden mask with a surface of wrinkled ivory, entered, walking as a man may walk in twilight and the shade of trees, slowly, meditatively, leaning on a staff. The piercing flute music which had ushered him in ceased. He paused and began his chant, at first disturbingly strange with its downward thrill and tremble, afterwards disturbingly moving and sonorous.

“I am a priest of the Blessed Buddha journeying towards Lake Biwa. Dwelling in Heian in the service of the temple desire has come upon me to hear the bell of Miidera sounding over the water and to see the Long Bridge of Seta. It will be proper that I should pay my devotions at Ishiyama when the moon is full. Twilight is now upon me. The dewy scent of the pines resembles incense. Like drifting clouds, like the waning moon, like ships that sail the ocean, like shores that are washed away—these symbolize the endless change. But the Blessed Buddha in His essential nature changes not and is

eternal.”

As he approaches the turn of the road he sees a very aged woman supporting herself with a stick. Her kimono is poor and ragged. Tattered grass sandals are on her feet. She makes a salutation to the monk and tenders an offering of rice in a small blue earthenware bowl.

She speaks:

“Once I had much to give and gave
carelessly,
Now with my whole heart I beg august
acceptance.
Honorably condescend!”

He accepts it. The Chorus, chanting with strange wailing music, interprets his thoughts.

Chorus:

“Who can this old woman be with her
unasked gift?
One might suppose a person of quality,

For though her dress is ragged and uncared
for
Her speech is delicate as iris-perfume.
In virtue of the revolving Wheel of Deeds
The rich descend in fortune, the poor
ascend.
All are bound to the rise and fall.”

The Monk:

“In the name of the Perfect One the gift is
given
In His name received,
But it is a rule that I do not eat
Without asking the name of the giver and
offering a blessing.
Do you dwell on these darkly wooded hills
Or by the lake of echoing bells?”

She is silent a moment, reflecting, then
answers sullenly and looking aside
from him:

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“Of the present I do not speak.
What are a woman’s doings to a holy
stranger?”

Now I dwell in a very narrow house.
In the past I dwelt at City Royal,
I moved amid noble colors and perfumes.
My rooms were fragrant with the twelve
 sorts of incense,
Each day fresh branches of flowering trees
 Were set in jars from the Foreign Court ^[1]
Waiting women combed my long hair to
 my feet.
And the Great Ones—”

She breaks off suddenly, and the Chorus with
its strange wailing chant proceeds with the
thought which she will not herself declare:

“The Son of Heaven and the Empress sent
 courteously
To desire my presence as though I too were
 imperial,
Their messenger bore poems in my praise.
I might smile at the wording but great was
 the honor.
Such grace was accorded to none—none
 other.
My rivals burned in a fire of envy

My name was—”

The Chorus ceases. She puts her hands up fiercely as if to strike at them and silence them, crying out:

“No—no. Be silent. It shall not be said.
O terrible—terrible this burning world!
Where joy is dogged by shame, and pride
by bitter grief!

I who have seen many sunsets
Die in this pale water,
Many moons sink in it like drowned
women,

Declare that shame is immortal
And pain transcends the Law of Change.
It cannot die.

Therefore I bid you farewell—
I who have met you upon the Road of
Sorrow—

Bidding you pray for me. Pray for me!
Oh, pray for my release.”

She turns as if to go. The monk in great astonishment says half aloud:

“Amazing! Who can this lady be?
She denies the Law of the Blessed One
That naught abides, all passes.
This is blasphemy indeed;
Surely all is transient.
Sorrow and shame melt like ice in
sunshine.
All things born must die
And being dead are glad to be at rest.
How should I pray for such a one?”

The Chorus chants softly, continuing his
thought:

“Pray for her. Pray!
O pitiful darkness of the soul
Wandering alone in silent forests,
Foot-tangled in the snares of desire.
Pray that her soul, detached from earth,
May seek the trackless path of the Wise.
As the swans follow the path of the sun
Flying through ether by their miraculous
power,
May she attain to the Lotus Pedestal.
Pray!”

The monk prays. While he does so the form of the old woman grows grayer and grayer and is absorbed into the twilight that hangs about the pines. The Chorus chants very slowly and softly:

“Oh, sorrowful, most pitiful that the soul of
man
Should cling to a drifting weed
In the billows of the Ocean of Desire.
Desolate the long night to him who wakes.
Sorrowful a mile to him who is weary.
May this soul, lamenting like the stork for
her young,
Ascending the Boat of Mercy
Be borne to the Desireless Haven,
Released by the power of the World-
Honored!”

As it ends the form has completely vanished. The pines grow darker and more breathlessly still. The presence of night hangs in the air like mystery. The chanting voices grip and hold it.

Strange emotion clutched Yasoma's heart. She saw, she understood the pitiful drama of the world's glory fading and leaving the stripped soul in the dark. Had she herself not known and experienced? The music was almost too poignant to be borne. The few silent figures intensified the horror of great darkness in which the blinded soul must wander. This was the truth. All faiths, the wisdom of the wise, the high philosophies, declare it, and now before her it was expressed, enforced. Quiet reigned. Every face was fixed on the dim stage, the men and women present watched the scrolls of their own destinies unrolling. Scott's face was set like that of a sphinx above the sands of the desert, brooding upon some dark profundity. Was there no more? Was that the end? It had seemed a long, long time since it began, so measured were the movements and the utterance so strangely diffused and prolonged, as though more in thought than in words.

She half rose, longing to be alone with the night and stars, but the figures moved again

from their repose. The monk looked round him in bewilderment. His pale mask and hands were old ivory in the twilight.

The monk speaks:

“There was a woman here and now I am
alone.

Was it a dream?

Oh, fragile as a dream her form!

Yet shaken with flaming passion.

Pitiful indeed!

I will do another service to the
Compassionate.”

While he is thus engaged the dark boughs part and a lady steps proudly into the road. She is clad in a magnificent robe of purple gauze patterned with small gold flowers, and a marine border of seaweeds, waves, and fishes in gold. She holds a fan glimmering with gold. Her face is beautiful and scornful.

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The Lady speaks:

“Knowing you journey to Ishiyama I
address you.

I am no mere great lady, darling of courts.
Empresses are forgotten, but I abide.
Men and women made by my hand walk
the earth like gods.

Often when my *norimono* ^[2] passed along
this road

Great nobles surrounded it.
‘Hush!’ they said. ‘It is She who passes,
She who can make us immortal and proud,
Or immortal and shamed.
A great enchantress indeed.’”

The lady begins a slow dance, gliding,
sweeping, using her hands in lovely gestures
to muted music. The dance continues a long
time with beautiful miming. The monk
speaks angrily:

“This is sacrilegious boasting.
It is desire which creates these births.
Those who boast thus are held in iron
earth-bonds.
Sooner shall a grain of dust become a

mountain
Than these attain to the Peace.”

The Chorus takes up his undercurrent of
thought and expresses it in low chanting:

“Yet pray for her! Pray!
She was drunk with fame and beauty.
A bright moon shining alone!
How should such a lady enter the Peace?”

The Lady interrupts angrily:

“I ask no prayers.
Know who I am and tremble!
I am the Lady Murasaki.
Under my hand grew Genji the Shining,
I created great emperors,
Lovely ladies, majesty of courts,
Lovers’ passion and its appeasing.
I made the coming of summer and winter,
And the trembling buds of spring,
The drifting of fallen snow,
The calling of flying swans—
They were mine, mine!
My writing brush was magic.

Here at Ishiyama in the Full-Moon
Chamber

I wrote my words on the paper of holy
Sutras,

And men cried out:

‘Beautiful, most beautiful! She cannot die,
Hers is the holy magic of trees and flowing
rivers.’

What need have I of prayers?

I am deathless, deathless.”

The monk speaks with horror:

“Words of pride and lust

Written on the holy Scriptures!

Oh, terrible daring!

She is bound in the prison of her selfhood.

For such, in all the Three Worlds

What quietness or rest?”

The lady interrupts him haughtily, moving
again to the dance as if careless of him. She
speaks, waving her hand like an empress:

“Return on your way.

You shall not pass.

This road is mine
I am deathless—deathless.”

As she triumphs the twilight fades slowly.
The moon floats above the trees. As light
increases the lady’s form changes. Her robe
darkens, and the gold fades. The change
grows and strengthens until she is again an
old woman trembling from head to foot with
the palsy of age. The fan is dropped. A stick
supports her once more. She speaks,
cowering and shuddering, in the
background:

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“Oh, beauty that fades like the morning
rime on grass!

I am not the Lady Murasaki!

I am age, age unpitied.

Oh, horrible ending of human life!

What use to be remembered when all is
dead?

When I shrink into myself like a weeping
child

And the heavy-footed years trample me?

Pray for me—pray.

As you go to Ishiyama, once the place of

my glory,
Where once I shone a moon of splendor,
Now it is ended—ended.
I wander and return no more.”

She fades into nothingness while speaking,
and only her voice is left. That too dies into
silence. The monk does service to the Lord
Buddha. A very faint light appears among the
trees; a dim voice is heard:

“Out of the dark
Into a dark path I now must enter.
Shine on me from afar
Moon of the mountain fringe!”

The Chorus carries on the monk’s thought in
a fading chant:

“The earth is drowned in shadow.
The moonlight grows.
Is it the light of the soul?
Namu Nyorai!
Lo, she invokes the Buddha!
Pray that she may find the Peace,
That pride and thirst may die like fire on

ashes.
Surely his words are water thrown on fire.
Worship to the Threefold Jewel!
Her fever is assuaged.
The dream of Illusion dissolves.
She departs into the Trackless Way.
We may pass on now.
The road is empty—
The road is empty.”

It was as though the veil of darkness had dropped. There was a long silence. Quiet feet passed them quietly. Scott followed Yasoma to the ship's side where she stood looking over the sea. The night was now serenely beautiful, raining stars on a sleeping sea. They stood together a moment.

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“Did I see it or did I imagine it all?” she asked in a stifled voice. “The trees, the moon—the long way? Was it real?”

“There was no scenery,” he answered. “But you saw it. And that's the truest sight. These people make you see what they will. It's a big experience.”

“I can’t talk about it—not yet. Good night,” she said, and slipped away through the groups on deck. On the way she passed Ito sitting with Kimura, both silent.

“Can I ever thank you?” she said, halting one flying moment beside them—then went on and was gone.

She had realized that life is a thing to be transcended rather than enjoyed, and the revelation left her staring at a light that dazzled the tears into her eyes and dried them with the same emotion. The vision of relying on none—no other than oneself, and there, within that narrow cell, finding the universe.

“Don’t speak to me, Bridgie,” she said. “Go and put out the light. I want to be alone. The whole world is opening out, and everything is strange and new. I never guessed it.”

When truth ceases to be a tradition and becomes real, living, importunate, she must be met in darkness and solitude, for terrible are the loves she inspires. And after the heart-

thrust of beauty but one passion remains—to be one with her. One terror—that of separateness.

Chapter Twelve

Some weeks later Yasoma and Bridget were climbing the very narrow, steeply winding way unknown to tourists and motorists leading to the hilly country of Naniwa. It was generally attacked by the aid of rickshas, but Yasoma would have died sooner than tax the brave little human horses who went so cheerily against such odds of tired hearts and lungs. And Bridget only consented to be wheeled on flat intervals where it seemed even the pines halted for a breather before straining upwards again. Her strength was her pride in any pilgrimage, and the heights and the dark quiet of the pines called to the mystic in her.

A wonderful country, in pure air far above

the whispering beaches that guard Japan, with glorious woods and mountains and wild rejoicing streams singing of the heights even as they rush to forget them in the ocean where joy is silenced in the abysses.

They had stayed in many places, guided by a young Japanese chosen by Ito. He had decided that Yasoma must know something of the country before the far other experiences of Arima's garden. She must see the ancient glories of Nikko and Nara, must see the cherry-blossom break into glory in Kyoto, must wander by Lake Biwa to Ishiyama, remembering the Lady Murasaki. She must stand by the haunted sea-beach of Ama-no-hashidate and own that the world holds nothing more lovely than the country shrine of the Three Goddesses at Miyajima.

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She made no resistance, but she knew how a lost child feels as she stepped ashore at Kobe and from solid earth looked up for the last time at the towering sides of her floating home—the only real home ever known to her.

There she had broken with an old life and received glimpses of a new one, how infinitely alluring and alarming only she could know. There, she had been adopted into friendship with men who lived in a world as yet only to be understood in flying flashes of insight promising more. There, as skilful surgeons break down old adhesions and release imprisoned suppleness and strength, had the hand of a master loosened impulses and hopes she had never known were asleep in some deep recess of her nature.

She had not even known that he was deliberately working on her raw material, for to her mind, as to those of all ignorant people, teaching presupposes prohibitions and obedience. It is not for nothing that a Buddhist priest takes no vow of obedience and is offered no rewards and punishments external to himself. "We ask no crown at the games. Does a man need any other reward than to be free and happy?" Certainly Yasoma had heard of no other. Neither heaven nor hell was forthcoming, but though neither had been mentioned she had an

impression that the conception of both was thought a little vulgar. She had heard no “thou shalt nots” and nothing of “good and evil,” though a great deal of knowledge and ignorance.

Had Ito then taught her anything? Nothing, as far as she knew, and yet she had learned to look into her own nature and find there certain strengths on which she could act with courage.

Beauty also he had given her. He had so restated the world that in art, in literature, in nature through all its manifestations, she saw a new heaven. Not a new earth, but new eyes with which to see it and the knowledge that everything consists not in itself but in the idea through which it is seen. These things had happened, but all was as impossible to analyze as the return of health to an ailing body.

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And now by his own wish she must leave him, and the thought of even a few weeks was fear which created fresh fears. She

thought: "It is as if I cannot live without him. But it isn't what people call love. What is it?"

Scott had said something about the passion of devotion felt by the Indian disciple for his master who is more to him than any earthly father. Could it be that? Strange things happen in Asia. Yet when she stood alone in her hotel and thought of those beloved nights and days floating in heaven between sky and sea her heart ached with loneliness. She might have gone with them to Naniwa but for the quiet self-control which was clearly the first article of behavior. There was to be no leaning on others, each was to go his own way without expecting support, and if help was given it was without any accentuation and generally silently. Therefore there was a growing strangeness in the life which was gradually drawing her to itself and sometimes a painful difficulty in adapting herself to a new mind and a new mental culture. Perhaps she had hardly known how strange until she landed and looked back more analytically at things which had swept her away at the moment. Often when he had spoken she had

understood the words but nothing of the spirit behind them, and had only accepted them because they came from him. But in the last weeks she had known that this displeased him and was certain of a gradual withdrawal like the sun slipping behind a cloud. How could she forget the last night when Scott had left them for a moment after a discussion on the harsh and abrupt manner of some of the most famous of the Zen masters and she had said falteringly:

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“That would kill me. I could not go on.”

And he had answered:

“Who asks you to go on? Turn back if you have the courage. Walk or sit as you will, but do not stand irresolute.”

His voice was hard and cold as steel, and he went off after Scott without a backward look. And that was the last night of all the happy nights at sea.

Next day she steeled herself to say good-by

without a visible flicker of feeling, and if they had all been separating for an hour nothing could have been more ordinary. “Have a good time,” he said, and laughing she answered, “Rather!” and then he swung off with Scott and never looked behind, filling her with the fear that he would forget her and that perhaps some cold word from Arima would forbid her to follow them.

She remembered Eleanor’s saying before they parted:

“Be very strong for yourself. It isn’t all plain sailing for us with the Japanese mentality, though their charm misleads one at first into thinking it’s easy to know them. They have a kind of callousness born of their contempt for surface-emotion which I thought cruel until I began to see they were trying to guard me as well as themselves. I think that at some great crisis one might often think them cruel from the emotional point of view, but there is nothing ignoble in it. It only wants understanding.”

Well, she would believe now that his thoughts of her were not cruel, but it would be hard. Instinct told her that both he and Scott felt her to be out of place among them. Nothing but Eleanor Ascham's influence had pushed her in. Would her own follies push her out? It was strange how the thought of Maxwell had dissolved out of her mind. Literally, she completely forgot him most days—a bad dream which she was certain could not injure this new life. She felt she had grown too strong to allow a ghost of the night to darken her day. It could know no resurrection.

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But that was a curious six weeks' travel in Japan. Shima, the guide, was a typical Japanese, courteous without servility, troubled by no European fears that the first might be mistaken for the last, endlessly helpful, eager to improve his English and Yasoma's Japanese, deeply impressed with the value of the treasure which Ito had given him such stringent injunctions to guard, and treating Bridget with all the deference to what he thought venerable old age. All that and

more, but tone-deaf to the unstruck music to which Ito and Scott kept step. She was confident that this smiling young gentleman to whom the faiths of his country were dim and fading legends had been specially chosen by Ito that she might have a testing time in the company of a sympathizer who could be trusted to see that the claims of this world were thoroughly represented. Let her escape for a while! That would be very like Ito.

Shima was the son of a gentleman of samurai heritage and fallen fortunes, clever, well-educated, and with strong artistic tastes; and before three days were over he was working his brains mercilessly to display the treasures of Japan to his charge that he might keep her on the lower levels of sympathy with his country. It would be a real business proposition. His tact was perfect. With a glance he could convey the conviction that such beauty and brilliant understanding as Yasoma's would be wasted on the dreamers of Naniwa.

“I have been there once,” he said. “The

country—yes—it iss a picture of a
great artist, but no other thing. No,
nothing. No statue. No picture. Lady not see
lovely art. No—Kyoto!! Naniwa *much*
worse.”

Eleanor Ascham had said with a touch of irony that in Japan Yasoma’s good looks might not appeal to anyone. It was her opinion that it might be desirable she should experience the outer edge of neglect. But that was not to be. The soft oval of her face, her dark gray eyes and whimsical mouth, half humorous, half melancholy, but always quick to laugh, won for her the girdle of Aphrodite in Japan as elsewhere. Little Shima’s own eyes adored her, and his tongue showed forth her praise. He carried his responsibility for her pleasures like a prince who repels rivals; and at all hotels visitors whispered, and hotel-keepers bowed, and she wore her London ways—with only the inevitable difference of place and scene.

It was clearly his hope to entrap her into a tour of many months—years, perhaps—

among the beauties of Japan. And when she smiled at the loveliness he displayed he swelled with pride and hope.

“But very much more to see. Ama-no-hashidate—you die of joy, madam! Three weeks there—certain. And Matsushima—oh, much more beautifullest! And Sendai. Four month. Six month. Indeed, yes!”

“That young boy he’d wile a bird off a bush,” Bridget said reflectively. “’Tis the voice of him and he as eager to please as a dog that would be doing his tricks. And sure, ’tis a great country and real decent people like little fairies walking in the dew. If it wasn’t for the food I could live here for ever and ever, and maybe I’ll get used to that in time if I put my mind to it.”

Yasoma throve on the bean-curd and rice, the eggplant and pickled plums. But the eagerly displayed beauties tempted her no more than the picture post-cards of which they fatally reminded her. Sometimes the ache in her heart made her wish that even for

a moment they could turn her longing from the cold and dangerous heights.

She said to Shima half resentfully:

“I wish you could make me want to stay here and go on forever seeing these lovely places and talking to these charming people. Do your best. Show me more—more!”

She said this while actually standing under the massed cherry-blossoms of Kyoto—a world’s wonder of aerial loveliness; and Shima who had heard the exclamations and adorations of hundreds of travelers—who heard them at that moment rending the air with whoops of delight—felt that the apex had been reached and an inevitable anticlimax had overtaken him. He stopped and looked up plaintively in her face—saying:

“I have done what can. Mountain. Tree. River. Art. Picture. No good. No more. Finished.”

Finished. That was her opinion too. What was anything without Ito's living word to make it live? Pain made her incapable of judging the situation. She could only beat against the bars of the time he had fixed, not daring to set it forward by an hour, and fret herself into terror every day lest the post might bring her some word that would put her apart from him forever. But nothing came. The happy days on board the boat might have been a mirage for all that was left of them. Long afterwards she was to remember the fever of those days and to smile and sigh in the memory.

Bridget's thoughts might turn hopefully to European hotels, but for herself she knew with almost a touch of irony that "Excelsior" was to be her motto even if a tear stood in Shima's bright black eye. That tear very nearly started as they turned from Kyoto and set their faces upward.

"But I go too," he said resignedly.

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"Madam not taking care for self. Old lady not knowing how can buy to eat. Naniwa people very common people. Rough. Not polite. I go, taking care."

It was still possible to him to hope that a very few weeks would disillusion this incomprehensible beauty as to the charms of a hill village. He built with much expectation also on Bridget's rheumatism in the left arm and resolved that the existence of the hot springs at Naniwa should be kept secret from her and the virtues of those at fashionable Miyanoshita daily dwelt upon.

He could not see the vision or hear the voices which haunted her in the treasure-houses where Japan spreads her lures to capture the imagination. And how was he to know that she had reached the point where beauty obvious and external could content her no more? She saw nothing now for herself, having only reached the first stage of teaching, which is dependence. The next would be very different.

But her heart bounded as they climbed. This country bore the very impress of him. She saw him gazing with keen inscrutable eyes on lake and river, uptossed moors, the cottages with ridged roofs and thatch-rooted flowers,

the wayside shrines hidden in whispering glooms of pines and the steep track which aimed at the stars. It was good to be mounting at last to the Hill of Meeting. And Bridget, satiate with looking at things she could not understand, was well content.

“’Tis time we came up into the good air,” said she, with what breath the hill spared. “Sure we were scrabbling about in temples and railway trains, Miss Soma, till I couldn’t say which was which if you skinned me alive. I won’t be sorry to sit down quiet for a bit and rest my legs and sweeten my mouth like Christiana and Mercy in the Prince’s arbor by the way. And I won’t be sorry neither to see Mr. Ito again. He’s that sure of himself that it’s easy to see he knows his way, and that’s more than you can say for most. Now that young Shima!—look at the little legs of him going up the hill!—he’s a good little chap and as bright as a bee for looking about him, but he’s like all the rest of the world, here today and gone tomorrow, as you might say. Now Mr. Ito’s like a mountain that if you was to come back in a thousand

years he'd be there still, looking up and up, and the clouds blowing about him and then blowing away."

"I declare, Bridgie, I believe you take him for Greatheart," said Yasoma suddenly.

Bridget considered this charge a moment in silence. How could a man outside the Christian pale represent the foremost of Christian heroes? But though Christianity was her friend Truth was her mistress, and she answered with courage:

"Well, I wouldn't say no to that, Miss Soma, and I'd be surprised if I said yes, but I'll go this far—that if Mr. Ito had the luck to be born a Christian he'd be a Greatheart and I don't think he's far off it now. He knows what he's after and he wouldn't waste a step or a word if you gave him the world for it. Sure a man like that'll get there somehow and bring the feeble folk along with him."

Yasoma was silent. Her heart went before her up the lovely way. She wanted no more

pleasures. Where had they led her? Toil and hardship, the austere teachings, the lonely problems, called her and with them the dream of creating in herself some shining beauty which would force acknowledgment from Ito. In that way she hoped to conquer him if in no other.

How lovely was the way! Here and there a little village like a spilt handful of pearls lay in a fold of the hills among tiny terraced rice-fields in a climbing mosaic. But for 193 these signs of life the trail was singularly lonely. A child or two, a young peasant or shy-eyed woman hurrying to their work, that was all. When Shima spread out his information like a map, she smiled and was silent, caring little for names, much for the meanings unfolding as they went.

A wild place set in the happy solitudes which need no human life as the crown of their expression. She took a little notebook and stopped a minute to read a very ancient Japanese poem which Ito had given her one day on board:

“Early in the dawn-hour I set forth from
the temple.
For, it may be, four hours I walk and sing
as I go.
The differing voices of the river sway the
moods of the stranger,
And ofttimes my *norimono* pauses.
Thousands of mountain peaks dwell in the
clear sky,
And the people of many villages are gay
and glad.
I marvel, having looked around me;
Where is the end of this wide and lovely
view?”

Yes—this was the strange cold heart of Japan
—cold to sensuous influences, flowering
secretly like her own wintry plum blossom,
brooding over her knightly past, courageous,
austere, and calm. An amazing country!

“Is it the novelty—or what—that draws me?”
she thought. “The men are so different, so
sure of their manhood—so implacable in
asserting it, cruelly in some, magnificently in
others.” It was impossible to think of the

guardian genius of Japan as in Europe and America. No woman holy and helmeted, but a stern and beautiful young man, the notch of his arrow fitted to the string, his glittering eyes on the prey. She remembered the West as dominated by the lusts and follies which the women thrust on their men, playing upon their sense of justice and rotting the hard fiber in civilization by which alone it can live. Was man the creator, woman the destroyer, and was that the ruin of all the dead kingdoms? She would ask Ito, she thought, with a rush of joy like a released fountain dancing upward to the light. She might ask him that or anything in an hour.

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A pause for breath on one of the few levels, and Shima came up to her. They had nearly reached Arima's house now, he said. The Hill of Meeting was climbed.

They stopped at a little turning from the climbing track, where the glimpse of a sweeping roof showed through pines. Shima announced in his best manner: "This temple where lady stay. Not good. Rough. Bad. Only

staying week.”

It was the last struggle of his hope.

But she scarcely heard. Would Ito be there to welcome her or would all be forgotten and a stranger meet her with cool considering eyes? She gathered up all her strength to meet the doubt. It would be possible to hide the bitter disappointment. Would it be equally possible to hide the flame of joy if he were there?

She entered a little winding track between two beautiful and ancient pierced stone lanterns on high pedestals. Beyond stood a kind of shelter with roof corners up-curved like horns to reject alighting demons if they should have the courage to perch in sacred places. Tiny green plants with white blossoms nestled in the crevices of the roof, and beneath it was a great bell of bronze embossed with sacred symbols sheened with a blue-green patina that gave it the beauty of a jewel. Beside it a large lotus-shaped basin of bronze with running water and a little dipper.

Inside lay a garden vocal with the bird-voices of very little streams hastening to join the river, and through them threaded flat stepping-stones for treading. The tea-bushes unfolded green pointed leaves, lovely with the small camellia-like blossom, and about and between them lay massed spring flowers, many of them unknown to Yasoma and the sweeter—like the strange thoughts of a shy surprised Nature hitherto unguessed.

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In cool sunshine stood the small temple among its pines and beside it the tiny house of the priest open to the wind—the screens flung back and the breeze hovering through it. He came out to meet her in his coarse white robe, and they exchanged salutations. She remembered Scott's words.

“These people represent a very austere side of Buddhism, celibate, living only on the simple foods produced by the work of their own hands. They're good neighbors to our little place higher up,” he had said. “Uncommonly decent people!”

“But how beautiful!” thought Yasoma. The priest had the air of calm abstraction which may be seen in the portraits of Blake and of all the mystics. He spoke little and looked through not at her as if to some essential meaning blotting out all lesser perception, and his words though few had the quality of giving out some sensitiveness of welcome which passed unspoken between them.

“You go to the garden of Arima sama? This is the temple where rooms are chosen. I ask you to rest and to drink of the tea which grows here. It is good.”

She let herself sink on a great mossed stone while the peace of the place fell about her like a golden sunset, and a sense of happy relinquishment filled her. Ito had prompted Arima to choose it for her, therefore it could not be bettered. And, if he were not here now, any moment might bring him. Not to have been forbidden to come was a kind of joy, and she looked up and smiled at Bridget.

“It’s lovely, Bridgie. It’s just what I wanted.

Aren't we in luck?" she said. And to the priest; "I thank you. I shall like the rooms very much."

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He bowed silently, a man of very few words, and she sat looking about her, absorbing the clear air of the garden, tuned to the vibrations of its great bell.

How it clung and drew her into its heart!
What did the life in the world below matter compared with this antechamber of the Unspoken with its open door?

The purity of the house—the creamy glistening of the mats, the little screens pushed back and the vista of another room beyond. She saw hanging on the wall within the temple a picture of the Divine Lady in meditation beside a running stream, with rocks rising behind her and a child kneeling on the farther bank of the stream, with extended arms appealing to the Spirit of Compassion.

"How lovely!" she said in a low voice to

herself. “How much more beautiful than all the grandeur of Nikko and Kyoto! Would one ever tire of it?”

“Sure ’tis a very quiet little place but I like it!” said Bridget’s soft voice beside her. “And I think, Miss Soma, that the Lord loves poverty or he wouldn’t have been born the way he was and stuck to it all his life. . . . I couldn’t but think of it when I walked in through the little crooked track by the bell.”

Bridget never jarred upon her moods. The faiths are sisters, elder and younger. But Shima jarred, with his clever little certainties, and she found herself hoping that some way would be found of getting rid of him and finding some country girl to wait on them. She sent him off to the tea-house where the ricksha men were resting.

“A very quiet little temple,” said the priest in abstracted apology. Yasoma could not be quite sure that he had realized them at all, for his eyes wandered past them, his voice was faint as the very far-off sound of water

that has its own business to mind all day. But she knew that the temple's poverty obliged him to let the rooms when he could, and the thought was pleasant that some day she might surprise him with a gift that would put anxiety aside for good. For himself, eating no flesh, he grew nearly all he needed in the garden, and the tea was his special pride. His acolyte came out, carrying a lacquer tray with tea upon it and two small blue cups, and it seemed that only one thing was now wanting to deep content.

Bridget also was glad. With her fine aging face framed in gray hair she had already become a part of the surroundings, as she sat gazing tranquilly towards an opening in the pines disclosing far blue hills of dream. The place suited her and she it. As if a vibration of Yasoma's thought had struck her she said presently:

“Sure 'tis a sweet little place, all said and done, and I'd sooner stop here than I'd climb any higher. I wouldn't ask any better than them little rooms, and I see there's a fine

spring near by the image and 'tis there the priest gets his water for his tea and I don't know how 'tis it brings things into my mind like—'and I slept and dreamed again and saw the same two pilgrims going up the mountains and there comes into the way in which the pilgrims walked a little crooked lane'—I thought of that coming up the track. If Mr. Ito chose it sure it's all right! They'll get a young girl to come and help us and 'tis all we'll want."

It struck Yasoma not for the first time that had she searched the world she could not have found a more perfect companion for a journey like her own than Bridget; her strong sanity and sweet content, together with her natural instinct for the hidden pilgrimage in life, were like the song of a lonely bird in twilight. Yasoma was silent for a moment—yes, that too must have been meant from the beginning—Bridget's companionship and knowledge. She could have done nothing alone, but Bridget had always understood. She had made it all possible. How true the saying of the Caliph

Ali! “Your place in life seeks you. Rest from seeking it.” At last she spoke:

“Tell me, Bridgie, why do you always think we’re on a pilgrimage? Why don’t you think I’m just seeing the world like everyone else? I never said I wasn’t.”

Bridget smiled more with her eyes than her mouth.

“If the day come that you’d got to tell me anything about yourself like that, Miss Soma, where’d be the good of all the years from the day I first had you, and you a month old? Didn’t I know before you said it that you’d have to leave London after you? Didn’t I know Mrs. Ascham and Mr. Ito would make you that restless you couldn’t like to be left behind, and isn’t that the way the trouble begins that there’s only one cure for?”

“But your cure isn’t my cure, Bridgie, and I don’t even know that there’s any cure for me in all the wide world.”

“If you’ll not find it in the world you’ll find it out of it. Anyway, thank your stars you’ve the heart to go and look for it whatever it is.”

Silence again and the sound of water flowing in a crystal monotone that set the life about it to a tune of quietness.

Steps. Not for one moment was Yasoma deceived. Scott. She sat still, resting almost listlessly as he came under the bell in its eaved gateway, quickening his steps in a friendly hurry when he saw her.

“I say—isn’t it jolly to see you again?—and Mrs. Conran too. I hope you had a ripping time. But you’ll like it up here all the same. Come in and see the rooms!”

“You came to meet me. How kind!”

199

“Why, of course! Ito would have come too only they’re awfully busy today. New men coming. . . . I thought I’d catch you lower down. You did a quick march.”

“You couldn’t walk slow, sir, up a way like that,” Bridget said as he shook hands with her, “for the sights would take your eyes off your feet.”

“That’s true. But come in!”

Could anything be more lovely than this strange new home disclosing its reserves shyly?

Purity and simplicity, rooms large or small, few or more as the fancy took her to push back the sliding *shoji* which divided them. No paintwork—only wood treated with perfect skill of placing and thus becoming a beautiful ornament. Pale wood, framed in slips of darker wood, and above this a trellis about six feet high lined with creamy paper and sliding in grooves for the partition, and, higher, an openwork frieze trellising of the paler wood and then the ceiling—warm brown boards with longitudinal bars across to break the monotony. In the living-room for decoration, a recess of dark wood and a Chinese landscape picture on silk hanging within it. A

bronze vase before it holding some small branches of budding willow. Of furniture none, except a few cushions neatly piled in one corner and a set of little low lacquer tables.

“A rich man—a merchant used to come here every summer until he died,” said the priest to Scott, “and he honorably condescended to allow his possessions to remain for the good of those who come. We have good *futons* for sleeping, and the cushions are covered with silk, as may be seen. Honorable cooking we cannot do, for we two live like cattle in comparison with this great young lady. But if she can content herself with simplicity—”

He looked at her almost appealingly and, Scott thought, with a kind of fatherly interest in her beauty and youth.

200

“You’ll like it,” he said confidently. “But don’t spoil the temple with gifts! We don’t want money here—we don’t even like it, beyond the minimum.”

She stood silent and checked. Money—
hateful!

Was it always to be in her way? Something
rose in her throat. The angry blood went
flying to her face.

“Money! You always think of my money as if
I were thrusting it in everyone’s face and
buying up the world! As if I would spoil this
perfect place! If I could throw away all I
have, I would. I *would*.”

Scott gazed at her with the alarm of a man
who foresees emotion and would bolt if he
could. No more revelations on your life! That
was his feeling, remembering the diamonds.
He sincerely hoped that she would cultivate
some self-control. There might be trouble
with Arima otherwise. But he said cordially:

“I say— Don’t go off like a rocket! Why
can’t we all say what we think without the fur
flying? Ever the best of friends!”

It was really very difficult to take offense at

Scott and moreover the Dickens quotation appealed her.

“I’m not cross. Why didn’t you say on board that you were a true believer? You could have walked over me if you had. I worship Dickens. Of course you’re right, and I won’t pitch money about. But I must help when I can.”

“Done! Only remember the point of view. A yen runs here until you’d think it would never stop. That is, among the people. When will you come up? Mrs. Arima and Sayoko are hanging over the gate.”

“Tomorrow morning. I’m longing to see them. Will you be there when Mr. Arima sees me? I don’t know why, but I’m terribly afraid he won’t like me as I am.”

“Why?” asked Scott. “But I think Arima sees people as they will be, and that’s not at all the same proposition. Now I’m going to see if all your things have come and to give Shima a little healthy advice

about food. I'll be back in a minute."

He went off busily, and she and Bridget were alone for a minute.

"Miss Soma, my lamb, sure Mr. Scott's a nice gentleman and he didn't mean a thing, and you looking as if you could drive a bullet into him. You don't often get angry, and that's God's truth. But when you do, Lord help us! Will I ever forget the night you pitched your mama's lovely diamonds into the sea? That would make a cat cry to think of them. I don't know how often I sat since crying tears that would turn a mill when I looked at the satin case in the big wardrobe trunk and only a nickety little brooch in it that a beggar wouldn't give you a thank-you for."

But Yasoma's sense of humor still lived and she knew her "Pilgrim's Progress" very nearly as well as Bridget.

"And when they got to Vanity Fair they found diamonds, satin cases—all the vanities on sale in Britain Row and French Row! And

what happened? Did Christian buy diamond feathers for his head? Come now—speak up!”

But Bridget was not to be daunted.

“He wouldn’t buy them, but if he had them he was the boy to sell them for the poor and—”

“And someone else would buy them and go to hell because he did. Shut up, Bridgie. Here’s Mr. Scott.”

It was surely a sign of health that she could laugh so gaily that Scott begged to share the joke. He was afraid he had wounded her “in the purse if not in the affections” as she put it, and willing to make his utmost amends he stayed until twilight was closing owl-soft wings about the garden, talking about the place and the people.

202

“A man was here today, a professor of physics in one of the universities—you can’t think what friends Arima has! They were talking of the world of reality and the world

our senses make for us. He said, ‘Have you ever thought that a man’s different looks in childhood, youth, middle age, old age, are all really slices of what the whole of him is in the real world?— I mean his reality would be a kind of composite picture of which we only get the separate details through our senses, in a consecutive sort of way?’ That stands a lot of thinking over. I wonder how the whole of *you* would look! I expect, perfectly blindingly beautiful! It would be a blaze of all the beauty that ever was or could be in any woman. A goddess.”

He said it so absently that as a compliment it required no notice. She suggested that an equally blinding blaze of hideousness might emanate from the composite whole of some people, and he went off laughing and saying a little illusion might do no harm sometimes. “Well—sleep well! Tomorrow!”

When he was gone and they had eaten she wandered in the garden while Bridget arranged the possessions which were always brought to give an air of home to their

campings—a home almost forgotten and valued not at all. No, London had never been a home to her—only a background chosen with as much care as a masquerade dress and thrown aside as easily.

Warm darkness enfolded everything, and the light of a lamp before the shrine shone like an earthly star casting faint beams upon the night. She stood to look at it, and her mood accepted peace and foretold good, centering in the thought that she should see Ito tomorrow. She asked for no marvels—that thought included all.

Chapter Thirteen

In the garden of Arima all was peace. He stood leaning on a spade listening while Ito and Scott reminded him of Yasoma and her needs. He appeared neither willing nor unwilling to receive her; it was all in the day's work. He was a strong man and tall for his race with the features and bearing of an autocrat and narrow eyes with heavy lids. Those eyes sprang to life in a disconcerting way when a thought burned in him or he wished to penetrate the mind of any man who came under his notice. Then they unsheathed black lightning. He certainly had no outward sign of command. He wore an earth-stained gray kimono pulled up through the belt for ease in working.

“Well, since you have settled it!” he said. “I suppose she knows what we aim at. How did you put it?”

Ito stood like a soldier before his general.

“I said one thing only mattered—to discover the illusion of the world we live in by realizing the truth which is at the root of every man’s nature. In other words, to know the reality of one’s own being. For to understand it, is to understand the universe and the oneness of man’s consciousness with its harmony and wisdom. Though no such words can express the Infinite Consciousness.”

“And how much did the young woman understand of all that?” asked Arima with a faintly ironic smile. “Did you give her a clear understanding of the difficulty of the way by which we attain this knowledge?”

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“I said Work, Thought, Meditation, to prepare the way for the flash of insight when

it comes. And surely there are those to whom the way is not difficult nor the waiting long?”

“And again, how much did she understand?”

“That she must learn by experience and striving. Seriously, I think her worth teaching, but you have filled her mind already and you know better than I. Even if she were not worth it, it would have to be attempted just the same.”

“Exactly,” Arima answered. “And, as there is no teaching to speak of and words are of no consequence, it matters the less. But she must be given work. Send her with our niece to the field.”

For a moment there flashed across Ito’s memory two hands white and pink as almond-blossom. One with a great carved emerald, the other with a yellow diamond seeming to receive and return the light of her eyes. Well, the more necessary that such useless beauty should be taught the first rule —“No work, no food.” She could retreat

when she tired of it, and yet he did not think she would tire. If he summed her up in his mind the result was always “audacious courage and an unflickering will”—when once she saw her purpose ahead of her. Yasoma would not have said so much for herself. She was acutely conscious of the flickerings though she drove straight ahead and through them exactly in the same spirit which took her flying over jumps in the hunting field skirted discreetly by most women.

“But I may meet one too big for me any day. And then what?” she was saying to herself that very moment, as she walked with perfect outward assurance to see with her eyes the garden twice seen already in vision. 205

“I hope,” said Ito to Arima, “that you will see fit to encourage her interest in judo. For a woman she promises well.”

“She has almost reckless courage,” Scott put in. “I honestly think no danger would daunt her if she wanted anything which lay beyond.

She is only petty in little things. In big things she could go far but perhaps unwisely. She has less judgment than intelligence, and her strength is fitful. It comes and goes.”

Something in the last phrase recalled an evening in Eleanor Ascham’s drawing-room to Ito. Yasoma’s irritating ignorance of Japan. How far things had gone since then and by what strange ways! He stood watching the unending ripple of the river flowing in sunshine and sent thought after thought flying to help her in what he knew would be a difficult hour.

Arima returned to his digging. He was making a new path from the gate to the Meditation Hall in the pine-wood, and no man worked harder than he. Occasionally he addressed the men in the hall and sometimes he would come among them as they worked and let drop a few abrupt words which yet were charged with meaning for those who could grasp it. Sometimes, as if by unerring instinct, he would single out one man or another and make some quick question, and

the man would either look at him in frightened bewilderment or in understanding silence and might go off grasping a new treasure in his inmost consciousness. As a teacher he did no more than this to outward appearance; but, as Ito had once said, the air about him was charged, and if the hearer's mind was prepared the presence of Arima acted as a shock that startled the common consciousness awake and produced a wholly new attitude of mind.

Scott occupied a moment in wondering whether Yasoma must pass through the psychic experiences which had opened his own eyes or whether some gentler way would be found for her to the truth. In any case it was worth either dying or living for, but might it not be too hard for such a woman?

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Arima answered his thought, after a habit of his, though it was unspoken. After all, he who has realized the Universal finds all doors open. He said:

“Why should she fail? When reason is left

behind and the body is forgotten what difference between man and woman? She will have what she has earned, much or little. Now, as to this path. The little rough path is more beautiful, but it is pools of mud in the rains, and we work the body so hard here that we must save it when it can be honestly done. You did well this morning at judo, Scott sama; you are teaching Takashima in every fall.”

At that moment Yasoma was standing by the gate looking into the garden. Shima had guided her to it and then hurried down the hill again to more congenial surroundings, leaving her to face one of the strangest moments of her life.

She knew it again at once—a singularly lovely example of the Japanese liking for suggestion in all forms of art. A place enchanted, with the atmosphere of mountain peaks and deep forests shadowed forth by their tiny counterparts. She saw the willow, its young leaves drifting on a shore-current of the river where the garden stream joined its

flow. She saw the small peaked rocks exhaling the spirit which sends the Himalayas and Andes soaring heavenward, and the little paved paths; and a shoot of love for the place ran into her heart like pain. It gave her courage to go forward to the far-off group of three men, and it was not the fear of meeting Arima that caught her breath but the sight of Ito. He was looking not at the gate but at the way by which she must come, and his thoughts were on her.

207

Hard discipline, bitter training for a beautiful young woman, the spoiled child of fortune! The more needed, no doubt, yet how difficult! Had he been compassionate enough, forgiving when she repelled him, as she did often enough by her fantastic angers and revolts? Had he ever striven to communicate the vision that for him manifested the world in beauty and armed the spirit with power? Tenderness like a brother's stole into his heart and warmed into a pale glow the reserve she hardened in him every time they spoke together. He had been remiss, he thought, even to cruelty. Surely it was nothing less

than an ordeal for a girl to come here among these men, strangers in race and thought. She would be nearing the place now—trembling at the strangeness even if she hid it with some rakish bravery. And Arima could alarm as well as guide. Should he not stand by her? If nothing but pity bid him that was surely his place. Should he not go to meet her?

Too late. He turned and saw her, coming alone among the little paths and trees, in a fluttering white dress.

He walked hurriedly to meet her and surprised something in her eyes that no man had ever yet seen there—a helpless pleading look like a frightened child's surrounded with dangers it cannot divine. "Help me!" was in the very movement of her hands, though she controlled herself bravely and, smiling a quivering smile, passed him and went up along the freshly dug earth to Arima. Her feet sank in it, it clung to her white shoes. Nothing could be simpler than her dress, but it was incongruous there in its costly simplicity, and it saddened him vaguely. How

could she hope to understand?

She did not dare to think of Ito. All she 208
was must be concentrated on the
powerful man who stood before her with his
bare bronzed feet thrust into the grass sandals
which Ito and Scott also wore. Hearing her
step, though muffled on fresh earth, he drove
his spade into it and bowed deeply, making
no move forward to greet her and leaving it to
her to advance. Ito introduced her, and he
bowed again. They stood in silence for what
seemed a long moment, looking at each other.

A sense of extraordinary difficulty, even of
fear, oppressed her. She did not remember
now that Ito was present. Arima's eyes
explored her with calm certainty, and to Ito,
standing by, a Buddhist simile occurred:

“Just, O King, as if in a mountain solitude
there was a pool of water, clear, translucent,
and still, and a man standing on the bank with
seeing eyes should observe the shells, the
gravel, and the pebbles and the shoals of fish
as they moved about or lay within it. He

would know: ‘This pool is lucent and still and there are within it the shells and sand and gravel, and the shoal of fish move or float in stillness.’”

So, in silence, for a minute that might have been all her past, Arima sounded Yasoma. And even her ignorance realized that this was no common scrutiny. It was the eye of wisdom piercing to the truth. He was considering her, free from doubt, disturbed by no theories, having insight; and his eyes held hers and pierced past all the accidents of youth and beauty to what lay within. It did not seem strange that when in another moment power relaxed its grip he should say without any ordinary greeting:

“You have come to learn jujutsu,” more as an assertion than a question. She answered as simply as a child:

“I have come.”

“Then look about you and tell me what you see.”

Then indeed Scott watched, and Ito was not unmoved.

She said awkwardly and nervously: "That is a strange question! What am I supposed to see?"

"What you can."

He stood with his foot on his spade as if ready to drive it in again and resume his work. She said with a poor attempt at a smile:

"Are you testing my sight, Arima sama?"

"Certainly. And partly because you have Asiatic blood in you. I believe it may help you."

"But does it matter?" Her tone though trembling with nervousness expressed resentment. She glanced quickly at Scott now, and then at Ito, but both stood looking at Arima. Her own eyes followed them and fastened on his.

He loomed above her, no longer a man but

such as she had seen him in her vision—a Power rather. He held her as though he were gripping her hands and drawing her toward him. She believed that she was moving forward irresistibly, though to Scott's sight not an eyelash stirred. Larger than man he towered, terrible in strength, dominating the garden, until—suddenly she had forgotten the others. They were gone. Now, and again suddenly, she had forgotten Arima also.

She was walking alone in the garden in sunshine, recognizing every stone, the whence and whither of each little path. Then it had been hidden in snow, but now spring airs wandered from the pines, and great trails of wistaria hung from the house and bowered it. How still it was—how poignant a bird's cry from the woods! How the swallows darted and wheeled in blue air! A white dove was soaring to a cloud as white and lovely, and words floated through Yasoma's dream like sleeping lotuses on a pool.

“Over the pine-woods of Mio,
Past the Floating Islands, through

the lower clouds she flies.”

But there were no other clouds. Only the one,
floating in soundless blue.

“Over the mountains of Ashitaka, the high
 peak of Fuji,
Very faint her form,
Mingled with the mists of heaven.
Now—lost to sight!”

Her heart soared with it as the white wings
melted into the blue. Delicious to be alone
and in this quiet! Wandering through the
paved paths she came to the little bridge
across the stream glittering in sunshine. The
charming toy! One would never have
supposed that such a man as Arima, stern and
rough, would care for such miniature
loveliness. She halted to think that over. Why
should he? Ah, well—a Japanese, great in
little things, little in great ones! It had
however a sort of greatness, that bridge; it
was so exquisite, with wistaria clinging about
the two little posts by which it was entered
and falling in long white trails to the baby

ripple below. She must cross it to gain the path beyond among the little rocks aping the splintered grandeur of mountains.

Suddenly, as she put her foot upon it, fright seized her. It became unreal as mist—was it safe to venture? She tried to laugh. A frail thing a baby could crawl across, and, if one fell—only a few inches. And yet? . . . She would not be daunted. She set her other foot upon it and, as she did so, was on a great bridge sweeping a mighty river roaring hollowly beneath. In front of her a ravine winding among mighty mountains capped with clouds and snow. She turned to escape from the sudden terror, but there was no garden to flee to; only a wild shore matching the other confronted her as if the arrowy flight of the river had cleft them asunder in dark forgotten ages.

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She went on mechanically, for between two equal terrors lies no choice, but despair in her heart was louder than the thunder of the river. If people who talk of the quaint loveliness of Japan could see this dreadful place! If she had

guessed—if she had dreamed—Oh, safe and happy home that she had left for this desolation devoid of all life but that which opposed itself as cruelly to humanity as a tiger crouching to spring!

Strange to say, she had lost remembrance of the three men with the sight of them, and nothing in her soul cried out that they had betrayed her. It was against herself she raged. The fool—the fool that would go seeking other people's wisdom and walk straight into the trap her folly had set for her! Well—if it were so—she could at least end with courage, defying herself and hell to make a coward of her. She went on among the great boulders which seemed to block the way.

A Japanese came down the track they hid, looking on the ground and walking quickly as if on urgent business. Hope sprang like a flame in her heart. An old man with one of the beautiful, wisely wrinkled faces that age wears in Japan. It seemed he would pass her by in haste if she did not actually catch the flying sleeve of his kimono. She did it

desperately.

“The way? I have lost myself. I was in a garden and now I am lost.”

He looked at her with tranquil sweetness, answering in English as she had spoken.

“A garden? What garden?”

“The garden of Arima sama. Little and beautiful, with a great willow tree. Do you know the way? Tell me for God’s sake.”

“I should know that garden. But it is easier to go into it than to leave it. How did you leave it?”

212

“I never left it. I crossed a tiny bridge that led to a path among large stones and I was here.” Her voice shook with terror. Never before had she known utter fear. He answered with authority.

“Then if you have not left it you are there still. You have done well to go on. Rouse yourself. In that garden the bud of personality

must be destroyed, the worm of sense slain
past resurrection. Go on. Never turn back.
But there is a man up there who has
slaughtered you once. You should not meet
him. Beware.” He pointed to mists gathering
on the mountains like white veils of death.
“Remember, or you will be lost indeed. . . .
The mists are rolling down.”

They took strange and terrible shapes,
fluctuating and changing as clouds in storm.
Once it was a city turreted and populated by
silent hurrying crowds. Again the mountains
loomed through with men and women
struggling in the snow and on the ice of great
uplifted lakes. She saw Maxwell go by her in
a wind of faces but dimly seen. She knew the
city, the lakes, and mountains. They were
places where she had lived and snatched at
pleasure that always palled, and the sight of
Maxwell’s face was a horror not to be named
in words. Trembling from head to foot she
turned to find her guide. He was gone, the
way was empty. She was alone with a
betraying past more dreadful than any future.
Words rushed to her lips—coming from a

depth she had long forgotten—a cry from the abyss of torture.

“I have no parents; I make the heaven and the earth my parents.

I have no magic power; I make truth my magic power.

I have no laws. I make strength my law.

I have no miracles. I make the One Law my miracle.

There is Law. And what I call ‘I’ is nothing.”

As she uttered them, power unconquerable and a profound sense of wisdom not to be expressed in words swept through her like a mighty wind, and she lifted her eyes and was standing in the garden of Arima, and he stood before her where the old man had stood, alone and watchful. It seemed that he had been speaking and was just finished a sentence.

213

“—and of all teachers the only one is yourself; the only wisdom that which is your own soul. Find it.”

He had asked no question, and it appeared there was nothing to answer. When she had collected herself it was she who questioned, pointing to the little bridge among the rocks.

“If I crossed it again would it be the same?”

“It would be the same until you are at home in the Garden of Vision. One day you will cross it and see it as it really is.”

“Have you crossed it yourself? Do you know what it really is?”

“I go to and fro,” he answered, “though there is little need to go or come, for all is in this garden if one has eyes to see. It is the gate of the universe, yet no more so than where you come from, if you had known it. Are you glad you have come?”

“I am glad. May I walk about alone? I want to think.”

“Go where you will. It is yours,” he said, and resumed his work, adding: “But not all the

ways are safe. Be watchful.”

She went up to the bridge and stood looking at it, lost in thought. The little toy bridge and under it in a lovely pool among the iris leaves fish were playing—tiny arrows of blackness coming and going in liquid sunshine. A place for happy children tired with joy to rest in. And yet! . . . Drawing her very skirt away lest it should touch the dangerous bridge she sat on a little boulder and propping her chin on her hand stared at it, trying to wrestle with the problem. The bridge led simply to a path to the river which received the little stream, and that was no river like the roaring snow-river of her vision but gentle and smoothly running with wide unbroken surfaces of light. One might swim and float in such waters with pleasure. Indeed, a boat came down with a peasant pulling it and a boy in the stern trailing his hand in the water. He laughed as he saw her and waved the dripping hand.

214

“Yet it was true. It was the truest thing I ever saw,” she thought. “If I had not been afraid—

if I had gone on—they would have been good to me and the way would have been a circle and brought me back here rightly. And I should have been free of both. I was a coward. I could not face the past. It will never die until I can.”

But who were “they”? Why did that thought spring in her mind? Two of the men—strangers to her—came down the garden and stopped not far off, making a slight salutation. One said to the other, speaking English but with some foreign accent:

“Now I shall take the boat and go across for the firewood. Will you help me to stack it before luncheon?”

Passing Yasoma he crossed the dangerous bridge lightly before her eyes. He unchained a little unseen boat in a bight of the river and began pulling to the other side. The other stood watching him a moment, then turned and went up the garden into the wood.

So others could cross the bridge and it had no

mysteries. She had begun to feel that all the garden was symbol like a page torn out of Bridget's "Pilgrim's Progress." The bridge was a symbol of the passage from one world to that which lies dangerously hidden behind it; the trees, thoughts aspiring heavenwards; the flowers, prayers or praise. But no. The mystery was deeper than an allegory— 215 something vital that went down into the very foundation of things as they are seen and known in what science itself begins to call Reality.

Scott came down the garden and she started up eagerly to meet him. Here might be explanation.

"Will you spare me ten minutes?"

"Any time you like." He sat on a boulder beside hers, and added. "We have an interesting thing this afternoon. Professor Kitesato who is passing through Naniwa is going to talk to us about a very strange *Nō* play; it turns on the true things which lie behind the world we see, and he will connect

it with Western science. I thought if you would like to hear it I could bring you some luncheon out here and you and Sayoko could come into the hall afterwards. Or would you rather lunch with them? They hoped you would whenever you came up.”

“How kind! But I thought you would have come to meet me.”

“So I would, gladly, but we can’t get away in working hours. I can take you down afterwards.”

“I know the way now. Shima came up. But I want to ask you something. Is the garden an ordinary everyday place or have I gone mad and dreamed the most amazing dream? Will you tell me one thing as a friend? What does it mean? What happened when I met Arima?”

His face was a little troubled, but he looked straight into her eyes.

“Impossible for me to say. I honestly don’t know. But I can tell you what I saw. You

asked if he wished to test your sight. He said yes. Then you closed your eyes as if to collect yourself and he motioned us away. We had not gone ten steps before I saw you speaking to him and then you came up here.”

She looked at him in blank amazement. 216

“Do you mean it was all only a minute or two ago?”

“Nothing more. But a minute may mean eternity, after all, you know; a minute is only one of our names for eternity. What is felt can’t be timed by our watches.”

She was silent for a moment, then said:

“I walked over this bridge into—No, I don’t know where! I shudder when I think of it.”

“I did the same—and I reached—”

She caught his hand and held it.

“Tell me. I saw an old Japanese with a face so beautiful—”

Scott's own face lit up as he smiled:

“Ah, you saw him! Then you are free of the garden indeed! He made it—and the way in that leads over the bridge.”

“In? No—it was the way out.”

“It is the way in to what the garden really means. He was a great builder of bridges. And he made this garden. A saint and soldier.”

“Was? Isn't he living?”

“More living than anyone I know. More living than even Arima. But he goes in and out as he pleases into much more than even the glimpse you had across the bridge. I—I envy him even though I shall do it one day.”

The deep feeling in his voice made hers falter. She dropped his hand and said with a choked voice:

“You mustn't tell me until you think I can understand. I couldn't yet. I can only feel as

if I had been looking at a shadow play all my life and now real things are beginning. Don't be impatient.—I'll do the best I can.”

They looked at each other conscious of change—change irrevocable. Not a parting of the ways, but a new relation of comradeship suddenly sprung up between them. A long journey, dark and difficult, by wild rivers and toppling precipices, and he perhaps so far ahead that she doubted if her prayer for help could reach him. Her sad imploring eyes said more than any speech—“I need you.”

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There was another silence. Then he answered slowly and more to a question in his own soul than to her:

“I'll do what I can. But you'll learn that you can do everything for yourself. Everything!”

He was thinking that it is warrior's work and more to choose a discipline aiming at the reconstruction of character. That way is stained with tears and blood. And a girl? But

he said no more. In the country beyond the bridge strength is not measured by weight.

They turned and went up the garden to the house, and Sayoko came tripping down to meet them laughing and clapping her hands. She stopped to make three profound bows of ceremony before she spoke. Then—in Japanese:

“My honorable uncle says you will come to luncheon at our little house, Soma sama. And then we shall come to hear Professor Kitesato. Will you honorably condescend?”

And in English, gaily:

“Do come. You promised. And my mother has made an English omelet and a plum cake.”

She bowed deeply to Scott and laughing clasped Yasoma’s hand and led her out of the garden by a side gate and down a lovely lane to a little house standing in its own unhaunted garden. Mrs. Arima’s kind face met her at the

door with a welcome that reproached Yasoma for having chosen a temple for her nesting-place rather than this household peace.

“My honorable elder brother no doubt does great things among his men at Zenshu—for so the people call it,” she said. “Oh, 218 they talk and they talk, but here we are at rest and we make things nice to eat, and sleep is quiet and the dawn’s pleasant.”

“And I learn jujutsu,” said Sayoko with meaning. “Yes—it is a good life here also.”

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Chapter Fourteen

Their kindness brought her to earth again—it was so real and human. They had set a room apart for her which she might use when she would—delicately beautiful and simple as the house a wood-fairy might imagine for herself if she stepped down from the cup of a harebell and took on humanity.

“It is poor,” said Sayoko after luncheon, with polite Japanese disparagement, “but you can honorably rest here, and we shall not disturb, and Bridget san can wait here for you and drink tea—yes, with sugar and milk!” She wrinkled up her little nose at the thought of that distasteful drink. “But now we come to the hall,” she said. “You need no hat, and your hair is honorably beautiful.”

They turned into the garden and went up through a little path between rocks to the wood where rose the high-pitched gloriously curving roofs of the beautiful hall made by Arima for the learners of the ancient way of spiritual and intellectual development which Japan has not forgotten—nor can. For it helped to mold her knightly system of *Bushido* and tempered the characters of her men into steel, sharp, pliant, and enduring as the swords they wear for safeguarding their country's honor. More than money had built it. Love was the right hand and wisdom the left—and in the eyes of Arima and Ito both were one.

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How beautiful it was in the wood as they went winding through the pale russet of heaped pine-needles under pines bathing in afternoon sunshine! How much at home were all its Presences! In Yasoma's mind words crowded which though long forgotten had done their part in guiding her into the mystic sight:

“The golden rays fell into the aisles of the

wood as into some noble hall. I was impressed as if some ancient and shining family had settled in Concord unknown to me—to whom the sun was servant, who had not gone into society in the village—who had not been called on. I saw their park, their pleasure-ground, beyond through the wood. The pines furnished them with gables as they grew. Their house was not obvious to vision; the trees grew through it. I do not know whether I heard the sounds of a suppressed hilarity or no. They seemed to recline on the sunbeams. They are quite well. The farmer's cart-path which leads directly through their hall does not in the least put them out, notwithstanding that I heard him whistle as he drove his team through the house. Nothing can equal the serenity of their lives. Their coat-of-arms is simply a lichen. I saw it painted on the pines. Their attics were in the tops of the trees. They are of no politics. There was no sound of labor. I did not perceive that they were weaving or spinning. Yet I did detect, when the wind lulled and hearing was done away, the

finest imaginable sweet musical hum—as of a distant hive in May, which perhaps was the sound of their thinking. They had no idle thoughts, and no one without could see their work, for their industry was not in knots and excrescences embayed.”

Formerly this had meant nothing to her but a beauty of words smooth and shining as pearls. Now it was suddenly a thing seen—a matter of experience. She heard the delicate murmur and interpreted it in terms of life. No longer could she say with Thoreau:

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“But I find it difficult to remember them. They fade irrevocably out of my mind even while I speak and endeavor to recall them. It is only after a long and serious effort to recollect my best thoughts that I become aware of their habitancy.”

No—they had come as returning lords to an empty home which was theirs. She said with hesitation to Sayoko:

“Is it imagination or do the trees here whisper thoughts to each other which some people can hear when they come in? And has the silence beneath them a voice?”

She had a strange feeling that she herself was speaking in a new tongue and listening with new hearing that could intercept new sounds.

“My uncle says that is true,” answered Sayoko, in a voice so hushed that it was a part of the quiet. “He says that for those who have crossed the stream Nature speaks as she thinks to herself when she is alone. You do not feel about it as people do who see a beautiful picture, but it is as though you knocked at a door and you are one of the people inside.”

A bridge? And Yasoma had crossed a bridge that morning. Was this something she had brought back with her from that alarming country beyond? Sayoko continued as if doubtfully:

“How can he mean the bridge in his garden?”

And yet sometimes I have thought—But no.
My people—all the Japanese people love
Nature and understand her well.”

“But you have crossed that bridge often,
Sayoko—surely.”

She laughed a little to herself.

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“No—not yet. I was only here once as a
child, and now my uncle says ‘Wait.’ It is
very easy to jump across the stream, so the
bridge does not matter. But you went over it
this morning.”

“How do you know?” Yasoma stopped and
looked at her with gray eyes enlarged by
wonder.

“Because people speak and look differently
when they have crossed. Ito sama has
crossed. Also Scott sama. Are they not
different from the men down below? And you
are already different.”

Yasoma went on silently. She dared ask no

more, but her hand closed on a jewel.

They went into the hall, empty as yet but for one of the men who was making the last arrangements for the lecture. Outside, the sunshine was golden on trees and grass, but only a few of the golden arrows shot into the brown shadows and filled the emptiness with dancing motes. Very high was the roof of the hall, lost in glooms of wood so dark that it carried thought beyond the unseen bounds of man's handiwork. But that was only outward grandeur. All the rest was of the barest simplicity—a matted floor, nothing else but a sort of reading-stand upon which might be laid a book of scriptures or commentaries or the text of the reader's discourse.

“But how shall I understand?” Yasoma spoke in a dismayed whisper. Sayoko smiled:

“Everyone here must know English. It is all right.”

All was so quiet that the fluttering rush of a bird outside was a violence to the silence.

Yasoma started and then sank back, relaxed into rest of mind and body in the dark corner they had chosen. Like Sayoko she sat on a cushion leaning against the wall, but her feet stared her in the face while Sayoko's were neatly tucked under her.

Voices drew near, and the men
presently trooped in. Arima was not 223
present. The sound of his spade could be heard in the distance. Ito led the way with Kitesato and put his manuscript on the reading-stand, then took his place among the others who sat on the floor, Japanese fashion. He did not glance towards Yasoma, yet she filled his thoughts until the voice of Kitesato swept him away into others impossible to be told in words; and there only his hope for her merged in the universal good.

Without any prologue but a bow to all present Kitesato plunged into his subject. His English like Ito's was perfect but for accent and an overfine scholastic attention to words. The men took out their notebooks.

“The *Nō* play being possibly the greatest art in Japan—or certainly among the greatest—may be approached from many different points of view. Today I take it from that which you study here—the opening of the spiritual eye and its relation to Western science; and that being my aim I choose two well-known passages as indication of the road I tread. The first is as follows:

“‘Before a man studies Zen, mountains are mountains to him and waters are waters. After he gets instruction in the truth of Zen by observing a good master, mountains are not mountains to him and waters are not waters. But after this, when he really attains to the Place of Peace, mountains are once more mountains and waters are waters.’

“Most true. For, in the first instance he accepts them as what they seem—unquestioned realities—the matter of which the world is built in one of its most grandiose shapes. In the second instance, after a little instruction he takes them as mere illusion, a deception of the senses. In the third, after he

has received *satori*, that is to say 224
‘Enlightenment,’ he sees the mountains
and waters as they are in truth and in their
relation to Universal Power. And, this being
so, it follows that he has realized the whole
universe in its inmost mind-essence. He is a
Master.

“My second text takes us apparently along
another line of thought, but it is allied and
equally valuable. It is from the Chinese *Yu-li-
chih-pao*:

“‘The hell that is ruled by the Judges of the
dead is no other than the hell within your own
heart. If there be no hell within your own
heart the Judges of the dead have no hell for
you hereafter.’

“These two passages may be said to be the
basis of those plays which have helped to
mold the mystic and knightly spirit of Japan.
Is this basis crumbling? I cannot tell. Long,
long since in European story we are given to
understand that the Western knighthood also
held a spiritual ideal before it, and to be made

a knight was to be set apart for service which took no heed of earthly reward. The title of knighthood is now given in Europe for political services or to wealthy shopkeepers. Are rewards here given in the same way? Ask yourselves—‘Does the samurai spirit live which made the *Nō* play or is it dead among our Westernizing people?’ At all events it is worth while to remember now and again the spring which moved the samurai achievements. Therefore let us turn to our plays. And the first question I ask and answer is: Is great art vitally and nationally important?

“Yes. To understand why, a few words must be said on a point always recognized in Chinese and Japanese art—namely, that no work of art is completed by the artist. For completion the man who sees, reads, or hears is vitally necessary. The work of art is perfected by his consciousness. He contributes esthetic emotion, and according to the great Indian Visvanatha that emotion is pure, indivisible, self-manifested—the very twin brother of mystic

experience. Here is a great saying. It tells us that the seer who sees is in reality one with the artist who creates; and modern science confirms this in teaching the unity of consciousness. Art both as creator and percipient is identical with what we call Enlightenment, differing only in varying degree from the highest perception of the highest consciousness. Therefore a nation possessing true art is one which approaches the absolute consciousness and verifies the saying of the Lord Buddha that to live with lovely things is not a part of the Cosmic Law, but the whole of it when rightly understood. For art and true spirituality are one. But we must enlarge our perception from the lower loveliness to the higher until we reach the Absolute. For these reasons a nation which is inaccessible to Loveliness in all its blossoms is dead and rotting.

“The approach of these *Nō* plays to truth is one which the humblest Japanese can tread, for it opens with the passionate and instinctive love of nature, and the kinship with it, which is recognized as a national

characteristic. In the Western World the love of nature is very recent and is even now devoid of kinship. Up to a hundred years ago her beauties were treated there with fear and aversion unless of the tamed and domestic variety. The nearer a meadow approached to the formality of a garden set out with flower-beds and clipped trees the more it appealed to poets and artists; and mountains and wild forests were in disfavor. Those true Buddhists, Blake and Wordsworth, may be said to have been among the first to open English eyes to the spiritual beauties about them. But only among the elect. I have been in beautiful English resorts where those who came strewed the ground with newspapers and remnants of food and left it defiled. Was this a sacrifice on the altar? I think not. 226 So great has been this blindness that I believe Nature in the West is conscious of the gulf between herself and man and is unresponsive in the higher vibrations which can throw the 'patterns,' as I will call them, into unity. In Japan she is one with ourselves.

“Therefore the Western man, with rare

exceptions, takes Nature merely as the background of a charming picture agreeably exciting his esthetic emotions. All things 'animate' and 'inanimate' other than himself are classed as soulless. We find this attitude, exactly as we should expect to find it, most strongly marked in the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. As example I quote from a so-called Manual of Moral Philosophy by a Jesuit father named Rickaby:

“‘We have no duties of charity nor duties of any kind to the lower animals, as neither to stocks nor stones.’

“The results of such teaching are frightfully to be seen in the brutalities to animals in Roman Catholic countries.

“In this audience I need not stress our knowledge that Nature is, like man, a conscious part of the Universal Consciousness. Not for nothing did the Greeks endue every tree and spring with lovely life nor the ocean sing with living voices to the dawn. But, with the coming of

Christianity, set in what Europe truly calls its Dark Ages. What was left?

“O limbs that the live blood faints in, the
leavings of racks and rods,
O ghastly glories of saints, dead limbs of
gibbeted gods.’

And a dead and soulless Nature.

“We escaped. Our saints and philosophers had always known that no monopoly of experience exists in any part of the Universe, and their passion for beauty was a pure unwavering flame.

“Now the whole secret of the *Nō* plays —that which makes them lucent to us and almost incomprehensible to the average foreigner—is *yugen*, a word of our own which has more than one meaning and which may be said to have been given to us by Zen Buddhism, since that form of Buddhism has most truly and deeply adjusted man to his place in the universe. It is for this reason that Zen has been hailed as the highest reach of

human thought and the most practical of practicalities and is as such commended in the *Nō* plays themselves.

“What then is this great word *yugen* given us by Zen? What does it mean? It means: ‘That which lies below the surface. That which the obvious hides.’ It is *yugen* which gives the mysterious charm to great Chinese and Japanese landscape-painting and to their portraits whether of human beings, animals, or flowers. To them all are one. All reveal the Universal, sphinx-like beneath the obvious, yet answering the riddle freely to those who have opened the third eye of vision. We have used as a symbol for this *yugen* a white bird with a flower in its beak. A winged thing, as you perceive, with the simplest yet most exquisite form of earthly beauty as its device. Could a man understand the whole truth of that flower he would have mastered the secret of the All, for *yugen* is the call of the Universal to the Universal in man.

“Consider the charm of anything which charms those educated as you are, whether in

literature, music, or any other art. It is *yugen*, the hidden meaning of yourself blending with what you love. You love it because it is yourself moving you to emotion and sharing emotion with you. Together you make and share a common sacrament. For it also is your true Self, the One Self of all nature and all it symbolizes. In the Universe is no room for two.

“One knocked at the Beloved’s door and it was asked from within, “Who is there?” He who knocked replied, “It is I,” and received the answer, “There is no room for two.” Finally the Voice asking, “Who is there?” was answered by the rapturous cry “It is Thou.” And the door was opened.’ Against that reply it is never shut. 228

“I will say that this *yugen* is the only true culture, because it is the only true religion—the only bond that unites the Cosmos. Happy is he who knows and who acts upon his knowledge. He is following the orbit of stars into the ultimate of those things which the fleshly eye has not seen nor the fleshly ear

heard. Concentrate on *yugen*. *Yugen* is itself concentration. It is the sight and the thing seen; the gate and the way.

“But what is Zen? A system of Buddhist philosophy and religion. Yes, but more. That question is asked in one of the *Nō* plays it inspired—that play known as *Hokazo*. The reply is: “The meaning is thus—

“‘Within to sound the deeps of the waters
of Mystery.

Without to wander at will through the
portals of concentration.’

What can be more true? How can a man open his vision but in the innermost silence and the outward discipline of what is called in India yoga? What other way can replace discipline of the body and intellect until the point is reached where both dissolve in the sunshine of pure vision attended by its concomitant of power? That truth is so well known, so daily used among my audience that I need not dwell upon it.

“Another question asked in the *Nō* quoted above is this—

“‘What of the teaching that Buddha
[Enlightenment] is in the bones of
each one of us?’

The answer follows swiftly as the
harmonic follows the struck note:

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“‘He is ambushed there within us unseen,
like the Golden Dragon [the sun]
when he leaps behind the clouds.’

And later we find this great statement of a
universal truth on which all the values
depend.

“‘In the wind of the mountains and the
song of the lowlands,
In the veil of night and the mists of dawn
It is cried aloud that Thought alone
Was, Is, and Abides.’

And a solitary voice adds the words—
sublime, as I think, in their assertion: ‘As

clouds dimming the moon, so matter veils—‘
It pauses, and the Chorus solemnly completes
the sentence with these words: ‘—the face of
Thought.’

“Yes, that is true, immutably true. The
universe is thought—consciousness. The
scientists of Europe, approaching by a very
different path, are struggling to this
admission. Hear one of the latest and most
famous of the band surrounding Einstein. He
writes thus:

“I shall try to be as definite as I can as to the
glimpse of Reality which we seem to have
reached. . . . The recent tendencies of science
do, I believe, take us to an eminence from
which we can look down into the deep waters
of philosophy. To put the conclusion crudely
—the stuff of the world is mind-stuff. . . . We
may think of its nature not as foreign to the
feeling in our consciousness.’

“Thousands of years ago Asia declared that
thus and no otherwise we must think.

“Let us now take one of the lesser known, yet most illustrative *Nō* plays. It is called ‘Yamauba.’ Let me tell it as a story while at the same time I assure you that it could be set down in mathematical formulæ and be neither more nor less true.

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“The name is beautiful. To you who are not Japanese I say you must pronounce it in four syllables. Ya-ma-u-ba. The characters are few—that is almost always the case in a *Nō* play, and in this they are but three. One is a great singer Hyakuma Yamauba; she has gained all the success which the world can give but a Buddhist unrest has disturbed her heart with the beginning of wisdom. She is called Yamauba though her name is Hyakuma; and the reason for this is that her great song-dance—that which has most captured the world—tells of a mysterious and aged spirit who dwells in the high and lonely mountains, wandering from hill to valley, spreading the pure mantle of the snow in winter, the heavenly carpet of blossoms in spring and summer. Her name is Yamauba—the Lady of the Mountains.

“So, casting aside the world, Yamauba, the singer, goes with a faithful serving-woman to seek a Zen temple in Shinano that she may dwell in its ‘blessed shadow of light.’ Even the light of the highest earthly wisdom is but a shadow of the truth. They travel in litters, wandering on and asking their way. A pilgrimage. The capital lies forgotten far behind them as they go upward along the lovely ever-climbing way to the mountains.

“Now they do not know which way to go. At last Hyakuma Yamauba remembers she has heard that the Agero mountain pass is the only straight road leading to the little Zen temple, and when you get beyond that is the Pure Western Paradise, a trillion miles away. That will be a long pilgrimage, but pilgrims do not turn back, for all the pent-up urge of the explorer is in them, even though, as often happens, the way grows harder as it climbs, and here they must say good-by to 231 their litters and go onward on foot. The dusk deepens, a weird dusk, earlier than commonly happens; the path is rough; they are entering a dangerous mountain land and it

is very lonely. This loneliness often appears in *Nō* plays—where one must move in the twilight atmosphere which lies between the ordinary consciousness and the state of clear perception.

“But through the gathering dusk comes a mountain woman. Who can she be? Women do not frequent these wild places, but it is evident that they have no terrors for her. Her dignity and pride and the mystery surrounding her as clouds veil a driven moon impress the singer and her maid profoundly. Again, who is she?

“The woman asks:

“‘You need shelter? Come to my hut, for I must hear the song you have made. It is not true. How could you know? But when the moon glides above these trees I shall come in the true shape in which the wild peaks know me. I shall dance for you. You shall know. But wait.’

“And so for a while the mists hide her.

“Can you understand the suspense while they wait? There is great psychic tension here for the audience. When first I saw it, cold shudders ran along the backs of my hands. For, you see, this true Yamauba is Life in Nature—a most mysterious thing until Zen has enlightened you, and hiding in such impenetrable solitudes that it is very difficult for us to know what she really means in her countless changes and hide-and-seek in moonlight and sunlight, summer and winter. But Hyakuma and her servant wait, and the moon glides slowly up the midnight sky above the trees, and Yamauba again appears to the trembling women. She is old as old age itself. Her hair blows, a white drift in the wind. She is thin as the skeleton of a leaf.

““Oh, ghostliness of the midnight! It is full of spectral things. Terrible. I see—I see! 232
Here in that frozen forest—a spirit mad with terror beats his own death-cold corpse, his tears streaming over it like a spring torrent in penitence for sins in which it was his accomplice. Terrible! Do not approach him. But all is not terrible. There is joy. Here, also,

in a deep mountain valley flooded with moonbeams a rejoicing spirit kneels before her cast-aside raiment—her body—and offers to it the flowers of Paradise, glad in the crystal-shining deeds of her life while traveling in the earthly illusion. What is the meaning? Are right and wrong only the same thing reflected in the distorted mirror of life? Are repentance and joy but two sides of the same shield? Now I shall dance for you the dance of Nature.’

“And breaking the sheath of the chrysalis the winged Psyche emerges.

“A wonderful dance indeed, gliding in and out of dark and light places, from thunderclouds into sunshine, from night to day. The two watch spellbound, for this dance is neither of heaven nor earth but touches the hells and soars sunward into the Unknown.

“But the souls of the two women ask in silence—Where is the answer to the riddle? What is the way? What shall we do? And the strange dancer who being Life is Death’s own

acolyte, for Life and Death are the one process, answers:

“Nature holds the secret, for Nature is not the veil of the Divine but Divinity itself and being so can interpret man’s own divinity to him. How can you sing of me while illusion still blinds you? Learn true sight from Nature who is Truth. Why do the spiritually-minded seek solitude? Because Divinity sits in solitude weaving happy spells. The waterfall foams down the mountain rent by wild rocks. Mountain soars above mountain. What sculptor carved these masses of green granite veiled in rushing water? What hand dyed the vanishing blue distances?”

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“So, in an enormous ecstasy, the Lady of the Mountains sings and dances. Now her face is terrible in the shadows, fierce and wild as storms. Fearful to see! The singer quails before the wild spirit evoked by her own magic of music. But the Spirit cries aloud to her.

“Sing! Sing! I have taught you. Revelation is

at hand. Spring has her moment of lovely insight—and it draws near. Sing! This moment has no price—it is divine and eternal. Therefore, sing! There is the fragrance of music in the flowers tonight. A shadow haunts the moon. Sing! Oh, do not waste these heavenly moments of spring! We have an orchestra. The measured thunder of the waterfall is the drum. Hear it throbbing! The flutes are the pine-whispering winds. The dark ghost wanders in the dark mountains. Sing—sing! The moment has come.’

“The pupil arises to sing before the Master Musician.

“Here we have unifying and perfect wisdom, for here is Truth speaking with the mouth of Beauty. In the West this spirit would have been a young beauty, in the East she is the spirit of immortal age which because all is One will return on the curve of immortal youth. The audience quivers on the brink of revelation. Even through my stripped words you may realize it. Here is a fragment of the song, but so much is it the voice of Nature for

me that I cannot swear it will be the same for others. What song of life is not shaped for and by each hearer? It would not be life otherwise.

“First, a speck of dust—and the mighty mountain rising from it will swim in the cloudy sea of the sky.

“The moon, fulfilled with peace, nests like a bird in the mighty heart of ocean.

“With a wind-wand of magic the deep pine-forests scatter the illusions of the dream of life.

“Here in the mountain valley the air is empty. Here silence sits. Living seeds of light the fire-flies flit.

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“No echo hides among the trees. No bird knows fear. They also share the song.

“And what is truth? It is ours. The peak of the mountain of Hosho-no-Mine gathers up our aspirations to the snow-peak of the Peace.

The unsounded deeps of the mountain valley
call us to lament over the black deeps of
illusion in human life.

“Sing! Sing!—Oh, what am I?—What are
all? I am Life sickening for Home, restless in
the human illusion.

“What is the Lord Buddha—what is man?
He is Perception. Unenlightened Man is
blindness wandering in mists. And in this
mystery (Sing! Sing!)—what have we for
foothold? Consider Nature—true to the Law,
true to her times and seasons, undaunted by
our illusions of cruelty or joy, looking
onward to the Calm Perishing with eyes of
peace. She is Wisdom unentangled in grief,
she is the soul of things made visible. But we
who cannot see—we invest her with sorrow.
We, who cannot know, we set our wails in
the immortal mouth of joy.

“Sing and rejoice! Behold the green of the
willow, the rose of spring blossoms and be
glad. Sing! But I—the mind of man; I—life
restless in the human illusion—must wander

through all the seasons, running up the rocks,
rushing down the valley, sounding the deeps,
climbing the heights—alone.

“On and on from hill to hill,
Awhile our eyes behold her, but now
She is vanished over the mountains.
Vanished. We know not where.’

And the women are left alone to face Life as
they have learned it, a blowing of the wind, a
shouting of the sea, and the soul of the 235
Divine One with Truth which is
Beauty.

“This you have heard. I will set it now before
you in the language of science which is
molding Western thought. She is the
youngest of the angels, stammering as yet
over what will be a full-chorded harmony.
Our way is the surer, the straighter. We see
our way as the birds see their way. We have
arrived but she almost must be heard for stern
and austere as will be her voice it is the echo
of Truth. Again I quote from one of the
masters of her school.

“Recognizing that the physical world is entirely abstract and without actuality apart from its linkage to consciousness we restore consciousness to the fundamental position.’

“Thus all that science can grasp of the universe when understood is that it also, even in its seemingly most inanimate parts, is consciousness allied to the consciousness of our own being. And the more our consciousness is developed the more we shall realize that this is Truth. For as this teacher admits there lies below all this mental activity that we call consciousness the whole realm of the subconscious, and even beyond that, as he says, ‘we must postulate something indefinite but yet continuous with our mental nature. This, I take to be the world-stuff.’

“On this, as you know, we who are instructed by sight, who are not fettered by formulæ, can say much more. Yet we hail with joy the release of science from her chains, in the declaration with which this teacher of science concludes:

“The crudest anthropomorphic image of a spiritual deity can scarcely be so wide of the truth as one conceived in turns of metrical equation.’

“Now what is the *yugen* of this Beauty? We shall not even think it beauty unless we too have reached an intuitional 236 understanding of *yugen*—as a practical fact underlying the misleading appearances of the world. It is for this reason that a great Chinese, Lin-Chi, once pronounced this truth:

“Over this mass of reddish flesh [the human body] sits a true man who has no name; he is passing in and out all the time from your sense-organs. If you cannot yet bear witness of this fact, look! . . . Look!’

“Yes—look! But some of you have looked. You have reached Enlightenment. You have known that Self within even though it be but in flashes of light through darkness. You *know*.

“Well, this *Nō*, in beautiful symbol, discloses

the *yugen* of us all. This singer absorbed in her small egoism had undeveloped *yugen*—but not as yet insight with which to see the invisible Truth within her, who went in and out through her sense-portals. Blinded by drifting clouds she forgot the Golden Dragon leaping behind them. Her heart had been astray in the dusk of falling snow; the Golden Dragon was invisible in her self-absorption. Now comes the spiritual awakening of *satori*—as we call it Zen—‘the opening of the third eye.’ Henceforth she will be a voice proclaiming the truth to all mankind—for the highest art cannot exist without *satori*. And so we leave her. When you see that play you will not see it wholly as I have told it, but your version and mine will be alike true.

“And now that we end our moment of perception we see that the symbol also is disused and dead. It has served its turn. Let us throw it away—and go on. Such is the teaching of Zen.

“... like drifting clouds, like the waning moon, like ships that sail the ocean, like

shores that are washed away—these are symbolical of endless change. But the Enlightenment in its essential changeless nature is changeless and everlasting.’

“And for this Enlightenment we use the symbol of the Perfect One, for in Him is every law intelligibly centered and comprehended. And by this we see the *yugen*—that is to say—the truth which hides beneath the obvious surface of the world as we know it. And all this from which we are delivered becomes dream and shadow of shadows. Did it ever exist? Never. We only dreamed it and are now awake.”

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Yasoma followed Kitesato no further. The voice became a quiet music delivering a harmony of unearthly beauty beyond her reach for the moment. Astray among the sublimities of revelation she must think for herself and find her own path however humble toward the Light shining in the East. She saw Sayoko’s face fixed on the speaker in a kind of ecstasy of hearing and then she

forgot that also and for the first time touched on the beginning of realization.

So that was the secret. That behind all she had hitherto passed carelessly by lay the essential truth, entirely spiritual, uninfluenced by beliefs or conditions, pervading all things, pure and unchanging.

She sat thus, lost in thought impossible to be put in words, lulled by the flowing music; and the time seemed neither short nor long but immeasurable—a state of rest and quiescence. There came the noise of rising—of bare feet on the mats, of a movement from the hall, and Sayoko took her hand and waiting until the last man had passed out led her to where Professor Kitesato stood under the trees, bareheaded. Scott introduced her as a countrywoman of his own, and the professor bowed with a smile.

“It is a great pleasure that you have thought our country worth seeking as a road on such a pilgrimage. You are young, but youth is the time for great adventure and old age for its

fruits.”

She thanked him gratefully for the welcome and for the lecture and added, plucking up courage:

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“I shall read the *Nō* plays. Indeed I have read a little about them already. I wish the Western people could use the form and meaning of them. Are they too Japanese? Is that impossible?”

He answered seriously:

“It may come—for we see that America is catching the light of Asiatic thought as one mountain peak takes the dawn from a higher, and the Western drama needs entirely new forms for those who can think. If communication comes it will be there. They are still young, still uncertain of their spiritual path, and science—the goddess of Western idolatry—begins herself to do homage to a Greater. Who can tell? But we may hope.”

The interview ended, and he walked quickly

down the garden to where Arima was still digging. He was to spend the night with him.

Scott and Sayoko offered to escort Yasoma back to the temple. But she refused.

“I have so much to think of that I had better go alone. This has been a new day in my life. You will understand.”

They did, and she went slowly down the hill between blossoming hedges with the sun sinking in the West and a very young moon floating wan and drowned in his glory. To Yasoma it was a symbol of herself—pale with revelation. She went so slowly down the hill that when she passed by the hanging bronze bell the moon had strengthened to a thread of silver and the dusk had drawn her gradual dewy veil.

Bridget sat by the little European table which with two chairs and a sofa had been hired in their honor from the town far below. Her face seen in lamplight was beautiful with the serene oncoming of age. Her lips

moved as she read half aloud and very softly the book before her, and Yasoma knew the passage so well that she could have repeated the words herself.

“Now while I was gazing upon these things I turned my head to look and saw Ignorance come up to the river-side, but he soon got over, for it happened that there was in that place Vain-hope, a ferryman that with his boat helped him. When he was come up to the Gate he began to knock, supposing that entrance should have been quickly administered to him. But he was asked, ‘Whence come you?’ Then they asked him for his certificate so he fumbled in his bosom and found none. Then I saw there was a way to Hell even from the Gates of Heaven.”

Yes—in however dimmed a fashion all the churches had had that vision, though more dimly than the mountain-soaring thought of Asia. She who had that day crossed another river into the Desolate Land knew so much at least and knew in truth that ignorance must turn from the very gates of heaven.

“Knowledge—knowledge. I too am in the House of the Interpreter,” she thought. “Can I learn—can I go forward? It’s worth anything. It’s beauty—beauty unspeakable. They never told us that at home. I see it here. Here they have the keys of all the riddles.”

Her heart so rejoiced within her that it could find no vent but in sympathy. She went and put her arm about Bridget’s neck and laid a soft cheek to hers.

“That’s a beautiful book of yours, Bridgie. I’m beginning to know that now. I’m glad you made me know it.”

Bridget kissed her tenderly.

“The Lord be praised, my lamb, didn’t I know that you’d see the light! And sure here—where the heathen themselves’ll give up their home to try and find it, if ’twas only the least little peep of daylight—wouldn’t we show we have the truth and maybe they’ll ask it one of these days.”

“But can’t you think they know *anything*—anything at all?”

“The Lord won’t forget any of his children in the long run—and they’re fine little people and as civil as you’d want to meet. But for all that—they haven’t the right notions of heaven and hell, Miss Soma. . . . But what did you do up yonder, my lamb?”

“I went into Mr. Arima’s garden and I went over a river and I heard a Japanese professor speak on Japanese plays. That was all, Bridgie. And now I want my supper.”

“Well, then, ’twas a nice quiet day, God be praised!” Bridget said, and fussed off to see about food. The old priest was reading a scripture aloud in the little temple as Yasoma wandered afterwards in the garden where the moon strengthened the shadows with a dying beam.

Chapter Fifteen

In the morning Sayoko came up the garden with her polite little obeisance to O tera san—the priest—moving in his white cassock through the tea-bushes, shading his face with a fan from the young sunbeams. He smiled kindly upon the two as Yasoma went out to meet her.

“Come up with me, Soma sama, and let us have jujutsu. It will do us good. But first we may see some of the men go at it, and my honorable uncle will instruct them. Have you forgotten that he is a seventh-grade man? To him jujutsu is *zazen*—one of the Zen ways of learning wisdom. You cannot lose your calm if you know true jujutsu—no, not if guns were thundering round you or a great

earthquake. Our fighting men have had that secret. Now come quickly.”

Bridget had taken out her work under the group of tall cryptomerias. The quiet of the garden was pleasant to her and the neighborhood of the priest inspired mental questionings to be comfortably answered by “Pilgrim’s Progress.” They left her in complete content and began the upward way, a heavenly breeze playing about them and fluttering their dresses. At first they walked in silence; then Sayoko bubbled over.

“Indeed I think my uncle is very wonderful. What does he not know? More than any priest or teacher. And men so great that their names must not be told come here to consult 242 him. For they do not wish that this great knowledge should die in our country, and they know it is bound up with all the honor and strength of our young men. They would give him a great university if he would come down to the cities, but he will not. He says the way young men are taught now is no good except for the Western civilization and

that it is diseased with money and luxury. If men want to learn from him they must come up into the quiet. What do you think?”

Yasoma answered eagerly:

“Right? Rather! You cut no ice when men and women are mixed up in universities and schools. I’ve been to both and I know.” She stopped and went on. “It’s the same story all round. Everyone’s out for a good time, and the devil take the hindmost. People ought to have to toe the line or be kicked out. Your uncle would kick me out as soon as look at me! Eh?”

“I think so too,” Sayoko agreed. “But we have taken up your ways and there is not now much *zazen* in Japan though it must come back. It is a pity. When Scott sama has done with teaching the men English here he will go to India and then west that he may tell the men of Zen. Perhaps some will hear.”

“I hope he won’t go yet. He’s so frightfully good-natured and kind that I should miss

him.”

“All would, but when my uncle finds another Englishman Scott sama wants to go.”

The thought of his going set Yasoma wondering through all the happy forgetfulness of dawn. She knew men never stayed longer at Naniwa than was necessary, for there were always many waiting to come, and Scott had come rather to take counsel with Arima and to fill a gap as teacher of English than to study on his own account. He might go off without any notice. Why should he even tell her? And then—she would be alone.

Alone—with men and women not of her own race—who had sat at the feet of another Teacher, who would be good to her because their creed commanded it. She knew that she could not understand even little Sayoko’s mentality; she marched to another music in every racial instinct. And how much less could she hope to reach human sympathy in Arima? True, her very soul had been

flooded with beauty and wonder yesterday, but without any personal relation to herself. It was given as the sun shines and the rain rains on the just and the unjust, because if either withheld its gifts their very nature must change, and that cannot be. But Scott understood her difficulties; she had felt it as they sat by the bridge. He could pity and rejoice with her. It is possible to miss a friend more than a lover in the things which matter most to the inward being.

She turned and looked at the lovely country below her—the narrow pale track flowing down like a stream, disappearing in unknown unsounded oceans of green forest and reappearing below. There were the terraced patches of rice-fields vividly green, the handfuls of villages scattered here and there at different points of descent. Not for a moment could one think oneself in any Western land. Beautiful, indeed, but with an alien beauty of which she did not know the beginning. It was written in Chinese characters for all it meant to her. Could she never decipher it? Doubtful.

Sayoko had halted too and stood looking with calm pleasure at Yasoma's face, misreading it entirely. She was sure that this was a moment of revelation and delight. The *yugen*, the inner spirit of the beloved land, was possessing even the Englishwoman. How could it fail? No words would have explained to Sayoko the meaning of the absorption she thought so happy and which was so full of care. She turned aside contentedly that she might not intrude while her friend 244 communed with Nature, and stood breaking bits of twigs into tiny boats and floating them down the glittering hill-stream that ran beside the track as though escaping from the austerities of the heights to humbler levels.

Yasoma heard and saw nothing. She was wrestling with revulsion. What had brought her here? Yesterday had not given lasting peace as she believed it would, but clouds of questionings and an amazing experience which might be purely hypnotic. She thought that if Scott had not come aboard at Colombo she could never have held out. She would have made the usual tour in Japan and have

gone straight home, let Eleanor Ascham say what she would! Scott alone had made it possible for her to understand Ito, and if Scott were gone and Ito withdrawn into the mysteries of the place how could she bear it? The impersonal escaped her as it had always done, and she thought only in terms of pain and pleasure. Well, but why be troubled? Arima was incomprehensible and he might decide Scott was to stay on indefinitely. And if not she could always leave when he went.

Could she? The face of Ito rose before her, dark and dear, holding the secret of her fate, and with a shock she knew that she leaned on him, clung to him as absolutely as any woman of the Dark Ages might have clung, before women had votes and built all their hopes upon a legal status. Much a legal status mattered when it came to things one really cared for!—when one knew that in one human being every hope was rooted: freedom, insight, attainment, peace.

“I have taken refuge at your feet, my beloved. When I do not see you my mind has no rest.

All is darkness without you; you are the meaning of my prayers. How can I forget your face? And yet there is no desire in my heart?”

The blood rushed to her face. If there were ever *that* then she must escape for her life. She had chosen a plane where such thoughts had no relation to truth. Well enough for others, it could not enter there. But she did not ask it, already she began to perceive that a woman may be a man’s mate in the hundred battles of a great quest and desire no physical union, believing to the full that it only shadows the white light of peace to which the whole world evolves. But there would be days, years, of loneliness. There were moments when it was easier to understand that Ito might set every bar of race and wisdom and attainment between them, for her sake as well as his own, than to hope for any sweetness of friendship however aloof. She spoke suddenly aloud:

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“Sayoko, this country is lovely, but it is not mine.”

Sayoko stood looking at her with dark surprised eyes.

“But why, Soma sama? In beauty there is no country. All is one. What one sees one takes. . . . Oh—I forgot! I am a foolish. My honorable uncle gave me these letters for you. They came last night. One night in the week come letters. Forgive my stupidity.” She laid four letters in Yasoma’s hand, saying: “Here is a large stone by the stream—condescend to sit and read.”

Letters from England through Cook’s in Ceylon. A shock like a thunder-burst in the calm sunshine of the heights. The revulsion overwhelmed her with a kind of horror. She had known that people could write to her bank, find a hundred ways of knowing where letters would reach her, but it had been possible to hope that she would drift out of their fickle memories, and no one would take the trouble to hunt her down. Now they had caught her. She felt like a fox with the hounds upon her. Yesterday she had begun to forget herself. Today she remembered very sharply.

She tore the first letter open—from a girl she knew well—Anita Stirling.

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Hallo, darling:

I got your address. What in the name of goodness are you doing? I thought it was only one of your restless rushes.—Last time to Greece. The time before to America; this time to Japan. But now all our crowd are saying you've got religion and have joined up with some band of rabbits who live on beans in the woods. Of course I don't believe a word of it. You weren't built for a rabbit anyhow. But do blow back! We want you and your house for stacks of things. Indeed I don't know what rag of decency keeps us from breaking in—real gate-crashers. It gives one a pain in the tummy to see the shutters up and think what binges we could have if you hadn't gone off into the blue. If you'd rounded up a jolly crowd to go with you I wouldn't bleat, but this is the limit. And all your little goats are getting into shattering mischief, and Jimmy Maxwell is perfectly

dank nowadays. He's incredibly changed—perfectly disastrous, and bores us blue instead of running wild and skipping over the hedges like the old days. He is letting Emerald divorce him. I did think his passion for you would act as blinkers and keep him comfortable, but he's apparently gone off the deep end and now he realizes that the baby isn't likely to have his black hair he has simply blown up.—Emerald is as pleased as Punch and goes about telling us all Jimmy's little secrets which of course we've all known for centuries. He's highly delicious, don't you think?

She had a kick or two at you—you'd expect that, I know. She says that on the way back from the Twelve Arts Ball she saw Jimmy kissing you in the car as she passed. I should think she just did! He isn't a fool. But—moral!—always pull down the blinds before the fun begins. You don't mind what a sneak like Emerald says? She is simply putrid. Have you struck any decent place which would do for summer if a bunch of us came out one

day? The Lido and all the rest of it in Europe is getting so stale that we wouldn't think twice about emigrating for two or three months if it was worth while. Especially as I hear some of the trips out are simply sulphurous. Have you anything up your little sleeve—or are you just prospecting? Life here is a crushing bore without you in spite of the fact that I've just been over to Paris and come back with frocks. Simply too marvelous, my dear. Incredibly delicious.—But do tell me in confidence—*who's he*? For nothing else can account for your bolting.

There was more—a good deal more in bold straggly handwriting. She thrust it furiously into the bag she carried, as a girl surprised a quarter of a century ago would have hidden a filthy book. Sickening. She must read it through later, if only for fear's sake lest they had guessed what they would only laugh at. What could she do—how cut herself off most utterly from the memory of the thieves who had thieved from her all the freshness of life and wasted it in folly? But there she had no

right to complain. She had paid them back in their own coin and had given as good as she got. In all honesty—and she was not dishonest with herself—in what was she better than they?

She looked at the other two—both directions type-written and probably business. They could wait. The fourth was from Eleanor Ascham. She snatched at that as a man in sandy deserts might snatch at a cup of cold water. 248

Dear Soma,

I read your letter about the *Nō* play with such delight that I think it almost brought me “skimming from billow to billow and sweeping the crests like a sea-gull” to get to you and hear more. I thought myself when I first saw them that they were worth a journey to Mars if one couldn’t have got them otherwise—and so do you. Well—I knew you would. While I live I shall never forget the first one I saw in Kyoto—an autumn day, the Kamo River flowing

silently as thought through its broad banks,
and the gray sky leaning over the great
hills about the town.

Steps above and she looked up quickly.
Down the bend where ferns grew thickest
Scott was swinging into sight—in shorts and
shirt, his pipe in his mouth, bareheaded and in
trim for a walk. No sun could tan him
brown, and Yasoma hurriedly thrusting the
letters into her bag thought he looked more an
athlete than a student—the sea still blue in his
eyes.

“I think I ought to wish you the top of the
morning,” he called out, sending his voice
before him. “I had an Irish mother, and it’s
always the top of everything up here, fresher
than any day down below. Are you going up
for jujutsu?”

“I’m going up to do what I’m told,” she said,
with an effort to steady herself and divert
suspicion, “but I’m wondering if anything
will ever come of it. Roses won’t grow on
stone, and I’m afraid I’m stony soil.

Yesterday evening I thought I could fly to the moon. Today I'm so flat that I had thoughts of England. Creeping nasty thoughts of flight!"

He laughed into her eyes.

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"It's always like that at first. A flat tired feeling. Everyone goes through it again and again until they understand. Then you never flatten any more. You may have dark nights and days but you don't trouble about it. Don't flatten! It's so dull."

"I have a very good reason for holding on," she said, with a touch of bitterness,—“and it's because I've nowhere else to go. I expect not only all of you but Eleanor Ascham too would fire me if I gave in. And as to my friends—” She threw her hand outward—empty.

“Would *they* mind?” Scott asked in surprise. Somehow that had not been his idea of them.

“Mind? No. They want me back.”

“Then—” He was puzzled, but her face invited no question.

“Where are you off to?” she asked brusksly.

“I’m going to the monastery of Naniwa with a message from Arima. It’s a gorgeous walk—six miles each way. Some day you should do it. But I shall be back soon. I shall have my marching orders and I must see the abbot before I go.”

To his amazement she stood in stricken silence. He looked about for Sayoko. She had gone up the track singing softly to herself, and they were alone.

“Shall I call her? You’re ill!”

“No—no.”

She could say no more nor even turn her face from him. He saw the nervous trembling and the struggle to conquer it. As her lips relaxed there was the feeling of tears in her eyes. He said with concern:

“I say!— You’ve had bad news. Those letters
—”

It was useless to keep up the pretense of courage. She could only divert suspicion and be thankful Scott and not Ito had surprised her.

“Yes, bad news. Perhaps I shouldn’t
have come here. And how am I to stay
here alone if you go?”

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Manlike, he blundered.

“But what have I to do with it? You came—”

“Yes, I came, but I’ve grown to be very glad to have you here. The others are very kind—but who can know them? It all seems easy for you, for you’re a long way on and I’m only beginning. And sometimes I don’t even know if it means anything, or what I am doing in this strange place. Your being English helps me.”

Compunction struck him a smart blow. Of

course it must be difficult and more than difficult, and he should have looked after her better. That call to race was one he could never resist, though it meant nothing personal to himself now. His kind light eyes searched her face anxiously.

“Do forgive me. I should have told you what’s the simple truth—I’m at your service night and day. But don’t lose heart. I can’t gas, but I do assure you it’s worth anything you’ve given up or ever could give up.”

“There’s a better security than that,” she said bitterly. “I tell you, I’ve nowhere else to go. I detest London and the sort of life one lives there and I don’t know the rest of the world well enough to choose. But most of all I want a friend.”

“Now there!” he said eagerly. “I know well what you mean. Yes, the Japanese are hard to know at first, but splendid fellows when you do know them and their ways. When I go—and it won’t be yet—trust to Ito. You can tell him anything, and he’ll understand. You little

know what he is and his utter loyalty.”

“He doesn’t like me. He doesn’t trust me. I’m only a woman.”

More lay behind those words than Scott could decipher, but he perceived enough to feel they needed consideration. There was silence for a minute and then he said slowly:

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“I think like the rest of Western folk you misunderstand the kind of feeling decent men in Asia have about women. Come now, I put it to you—do you think the average man in the West thinks of women as exactly guardian angels? He has been obliged, very grudgingly, to give them certain rights which may or may not turn out to have been wise; but men don’t really *like* women as a whole though goodness knows they fall in love with them. Perhaps in Asia they don’t trust them any more than the average man does in the West, but I think they like and understand them better. Remember Asia has her ideal women too. Maya, the mother of the Buddha,

is one of them. You will never find that Ito despises you because you're a woman. He trusts you, or you wouldn't be here. What I wish you'd do is to speak to him as frankly as you did just now to me. You'll get straight through."

She said in a low voice, "I daren't."

"Do. I know what I'm saying. Arima has told him to help you. Ask him about it."

She looked up with a gleam of joy:

"Really?"

"Of course. Go up and have a talk with him. I'll tell you another thing I think. I believe you're mentally tired. Brain fag! A good set-to at jujutsu would do you a mint of good. 'And work till you gently perspire,' doesn't somebody say? It's a good sure cure when you've got the hump."

The words of a great Indian occurred to him. "There is a fourfold circle of lethargy,

stimulation, exhaustion, and extinction in all life.”—Most certainly in all women until they had learned the way of control. It was very clear to his mind that Yasoma was in the third stage, and he looked at her with sympathy.

“Do be sensible and don’t go too fast,” 252 he said in an elder-brother tone. “Let me take you up to Ito and then I’ll be off. Of course you can count on me for anything.”

But she would not go with him and he went on. For to be alone seemed necessary to her at the moment. After he had left her and gone a little way he began to sing—and so he and his voice died out in a vibration of happiness as joyful as the wind in the trees.

She sat down again, willing still to be alone, and after a time of confused thinking took out Eleanor’s letter and turned to where she had left off. There might be some chance word that would hit the mark of her trouble. There were many things in her life she had never told Eleanor and never meant to, even before the great catastrophe that had rent her world asunder, but yet her chance words had often

sowed seeds unknown to Eleanor herself.

Yes, it was lovely that day in Kyoto. I believe you will see it too. It has beauty so strange and insubstantial that one can hardly write of it. Words cling as lightly as a cobweb holds its strung diamonds before the sun drinks them up.

I like what you tell me of the *Nō* on board the boat. Didn't the bareness of the scenery please you? Nothing to think about at all but the words and the people who utter them and the real world all around us breaking through the false surface of this.

Those plays are the very voice of the inner consciousness. Get Ito to tell you much more about them. They are pure truth and that is what you need. I dreamed of you last night and had a kind of instinct in my dream that the way for you will be through intelligence, imagination, and a love of the severely beautiful. You always hated the tricky kind of prettiness that satisfies most people. I suppose you took no

books so I'm going to send you a complete Blake and a Wordsworth to match. Both are Buddhists, as so many people are without knowing it. Both are healing and give a kind of generous forgetfulness of anything which may have wounded one.

Listen to this;

“The emblem of a mind
That feeds upon infinity, that broods
Over the dark Abyss, intent to hear
Its voices issuing forth to silent Light
In one continuous stream.”

How could one bother about anything else? But in a dream—strangely mixed up with Bridget and the Pilgrim's Progress—I saw you climbing a mountain, very wearied, but with all your own courage, as when we were in Switzerland and you went ahead as if you had wings. But you had a burden bound on your shoulders, and you were nearly done in. Suddenly it broke into a great flame and it was gone. Ask Ito if that was a true dream. You know they say in

Zen that Enlightenment comes in fire and light.

Good-by. I will come some day, but you are better alone with Ito and Arima now.

Yasoma laid the letter down in a tempest of emotion no words could carry. Delight—the sense of something stronger and purer than the aroma of pines in sunlit heights calmed her. The sense of some dim beauty ever on before inspired her. The knowledge that what is the Beautiful must also be the True, which is indeed the first article in the creed of wisdom—all these instructed her, even if only for a moment, that her fall was a thing done in ignorance like a child's step on a dark stairway. A thing to be retrieved, not lamented. One does not stay to mourn over the corpse of a dead past with the living future beckoning ahead.

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But the inspiration that blew like a pure wind from the letter forbade her to sit and brood over it. She would read it again and again, but not now. She would consider Eleanor's offer

to come out, and write fully when she knew her own mind. It could not be yet. She took up the next letter and opened it carelessly, and then with a shock of horror saw it was from Maxwell. He had never had the power to make her heart beat a stroke quicker, but now it throbbed like a trapped bird's, and her hands shook so that she could scarcely unfold it. How had he dared to write? Why should he not dare? If a man may not write to his mistress—No—it was agony. To every quiver of rage and fear in her Truth made answer: “You did it. It is the work of your own hands.” And again: “If he is a cur, you made him *your* cur. Why be surprised that he runs at your heels?”

At long last she began to read, not daring to destroy it unread lest there should be some other plot against her peace.

It had been sent on from Cook's at Colombo.

Darling old Girl:

Why on God's earth haven't you written?

If you must go off like that you might at least have sent a word from the places you stopped at. I tried to get you at Cannes for Marion—damn her! I won't call her Emerald—heard you were there with Amy Prideaux. But of course that didn't get you. I must say it was damned hard lines you didn't write, and I don't understand it at all, unless it was that you were waiting to hear from me. A man goes through

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hell, and women don't understand it. Well, then, I must begin at the beginning and I can only say it would have been a jolly sight better if you had stayed here or gone to some civilized place where I could have run out to talk things over. You seem to forget it's a *mutual* interest. Still, I know how you take things for granted, and after all it's up to me to fix up things for us both.

To make a long story short you know I had good reason to think the child wasn't mine and at last Marion has owned up. She wants to get quit of me and marry Denning. Well and good! I can bow her out for a good riddance, *but*—here comes the

bother. She is determined to divorce me and she wants to get her knife into you. Naturally no one thinks much of this kind of thing nowadays, but I want you kept out of it; and as she is pretty well frozen on to her own scheme I think the best way is for me to let her go in her own way. That is I shall furnish her lawyers with the usual hotel evidence and let her divorce me. I'm sure you'll understand and approve. Of course it's only a formality. Nothing in it at all, but it will satisfy her and set us free to do what we like. Now as to that I have no doubts and I know you haven't, darling. I take all you said and did as very natural, for I know it was a big thing for you and that no matter what some of our crowd said you were as straight as a girl could be until you gave yourself to me. Nobody needs to tell me about that. So what I really want to say is that I think it may be as well all round that you are out of England just now while all this beastly stuff is going on. It won't be very long either before the case comes on, for they do divorces nowadays at the rate of a dozen to the hour. So

what I hope is that you'll stay away
till it's through. Then, for the time that
comes after, you could get back to Europe
—Paris or the Riviera or somewhere jolly
—and we could see each other and plan
our wedding. And another thing I want to
say— It isn't money I'm after, though I
haven't got a dib of my own when Marion
is off, so I hope your lawyers will tie up all
you've got as close as wax. I don't mind
eating out of your hand though I couldn't
go on doing it from hers. Now when you
get this, send me a cable to the club
—“Yes”—just that, and don't sign your
name. Then I shall know you're behind me
in all these plans. Of course you can write
freely, but it's just as well to be wary with
cables, don't you think?

Isn't it a gorgeous outlook for us? Which
of us will be the best pleased? I back
myself, because you've been the best pal a
man ever had for the last two years and
though I don't think you'll say I was a bad
one, I can't come up to you. But we'll be
as jolly as two people could be, for we

know each other and our world. So what more is wanted?

There was a little more, but she glanced down it—and folded the letter and put it away with the rest. So that was that! She sat with her eyes moodily bent on the pebbles at her feet, and her first thought was gladness that Scott was gone, striding off through clear air and sunshine in the immense space and purity of the great moors and leaving her to her wretchedness. How had she ever for a minute imagined that she could escape the shadow? Was it reasonable to expect it when it was her own? How had she dared to talk to Ito, Arima—and steal their kindness on false pretenses? Such a thing might be dismissed with a sneer or a snigger in her world, but not in theirs. She could not even plead inexperience. A woman of twenty-four who has lived in such a London—such a Europe—as hers cannot play the broken-hearted innocent who has fallen into a trap.

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Why play anything? Why not say to them openly, “You’re wasting your pains; I am fit

for nothing but the slough I came from; let me slip back into it and forget this dream of another life for ever and ever”?

Should she say this to Arima and Ito? Their eyes would look through and through her. Her secret would be noonday clear to them. And then what? To Scott? He would veil his contempt with kindness, but it would be contempt. After all, in the bottom of their hearts all decent men still expect some rag of decency from women. Oh, for someone who would see through her evil to her good—who would believe in her, strengthen her, call from far ahead! “Come on! It can be done. Only cut loose and come!”

Perhaps she could struggle on then.

Should she leave the letter unanswered or cable that she was done with him? In either case he might make some horrible explosion through sheer stupidity. Something that might drag her to him in spite of all her resolution. It is more difficult to break with an old accustomed life than anyone can know who

has not tried, and that difficulty too would play upon his side. Of course she must cable at once to Colombo that her address must be given to no one, though how to send it she did not know. She must ask Arima. So her mind tossed to and fro until she could control its doubts and terrors no longer. They took charge, and she sat in the shadow she had made for herself, earth and heaven closing in in a great enshrouding darkness.

Finally she came to a half-resolution that she would take time to consider and would send no cable to Maxwell. Perhaps she might see Scott soon, and it would be possible, very cautiously, with the lightest possible touch, to put some kind of suppositious case of the kind before him and get some ray of light without his dreaming her reason. He knew the world though he had renounced it—he might say something that would shape her attitude somehow. One needs an impartial outsider. But she must go warily along the edge of things; for a fall there—No, it would not bear thinking of! Her world was full of hate and fear. But she must

instantly send the cable to Colombo. If Maxwell knew her hiding-place he might put his knowledge to terrifying use.

She sprang to her feet and went hurrying up the hill.

Chapter Sixteen

She went into the garden of Arima. He was not there, but Ito stood by the bridge as if waiting for someone. Surely it could not be for her? Yet he came forward as if that had been his meaning, and with the very sight of his face all good became possible again, and to draw near him in heart, to serve, to learn from him, to adore the meaning of his words was clearly safety, redemption, and paradise. Could a Western woman feel like that, or was she following the great tradition of the Asiatic woman? How could she think or reason? She could only know that in this lay her all. Other things were the means of life, but this was life itself. Her one dread was that this intense radiation from her heart might burn its way to him and light up her very soul

before him.

She put on a woman's armor as best she could and met him with dropped eyes:

“May I ask you a question? I must send a cable and I don't know how.”

“Of course. Write it now, and it shall go down at once. Here are pencil and paper.”

She wrote on a book he handed her.

“Coupon Colombo. Give my address to no one.”

He called a young man and sent him off on the spot, then turned to her.

“I was waiting for you. I was working in the field and suddenly I knew I could be useful, so I came back that you might sit here and tell me what I can do? Will it make it easier if I say that Arima sama has told me to be at your service? He says there are reasons why you may wish this. Do you agree with him?”

She could not refrain from saying, “With all my heart,” and for a moment could add nothing to it. He led the way to the arbor made by the willow tree and parting the hanging boughs for her opened a door as it were and followed her in to a little seat which Scott had put up there for his own convenience.

A place of perfect peace. The delicate drapery of green swayed in every breath of breeze like the very soul of sweet delight. The river murmured before the willow as one friend whispers to another what the gross world may not hear, a woven flowing music of consciousness rather than sound. Ito sat for a moment absorbing the beauty born of sound and color in a harmony blending the exquisiteness of both, and she could not break in upon his thought. At last he turned to her.

“You had news which distressed you?”

The difficulty now was to restrain the impulse to unburden her heart. That he should ask and she answer was the fruit of her birth.

From one revelation only every instinct held her back. She spoke with a sob in her voice:

“Yes. . . . But it will be all right if you tell me things—not that it alters it—for nothing could do that, but how to leave it behind and get out of its shadow. Must a thing done shadow all one’s days?”

He looked at her with that dark glance which had the intensity of light in searching her being.

“It should not shadow *one*. The consequences will follow in your own mind, and the minds of the other people affected by it. That will be according to the way in which you and they think of your deed. But as your consciousness begins to work on higher planes you can entirely change the pattern of your thoughts about it. I say ‘pattern’ because your consciousness directs the groupings of your brain. And as to any part your body took in the deed—your body has no factual existence. It is only a constantly modifying pattern thrown together for a time by

consciousness and enlightened consciousness can throw it into a new pattern. That is the chief secret of faith-healing. You have never seen a perfect example of that. I will show you one some day. Even according to the uninstructed world's teaching every cell of your body has changed in a seven years' period. Is it worth while to be concerned about such a body? What is needed is to discipline it into obedience to your consciousness."

"But there's always memory. A ghost goes with one."

"Yes. Memory is a mysterious thing, because it appears to be the string running through all the beads. But it also is the slave of consciousness and is directed by it into peace or tumult."

"Not peace while I am I," she said, with agony that made words almost impossible. His eyes held hers.

"You are not you. You were never you. What

you call 'me' is only a part of the universal consciousness separating from the whole and running into its own little dark rabbit-burrow and calling itself 'I.' But the sun and winds that are you can make you clean. Every heroic deed is yours. Realize the truth and, as it says in your own Scripture, you are free. Have you ever understood what the forgiveness of sins really means?"

"I never believed in it. It's illogical and absurd. The thing done is done."

"And can be undone if you can clear up your relation to life, which is exactly what 262 Zen teaches. Live in the real world and what will this shifting shadow-scene matter? Science has given up the notion of its reality; why should not you? Besides, the psyche in you which did that deed is no longer yours. You loathe it now. Why tie yourself to a corpse, you who stand on the threshold of a new world? Live in that, and no effects of your deeds in this will have power to hurt or cripple you. I tell you the simple truth and if you were not walking in the twilight between

two worlds you would see it. Or, to put it better, the two worlds are in every man, and you have only lately begun to realize how the real contradicts the unreal. They are battling within you.”

She quoted bitterly: “Not even God Himself can undo what is done.”

He laughed: “Do you say a dream exists in reality? It exists while you dream. Wake, and it is gone. And in the same way a deed ceases to exist when you wake from the illusion in which you did it.”

“But I remember it.”

“Do you not remember your dreams? I had one last night. A foreshadowing of what you would call a deed. The deed will be as much and as little a dream as its foreshadowing, and is in one sense already done. And some dreams have moved the world. Sometimes I think it is only the dreams that do.”

She said sighing: “If this were all true.”

“It is true. The universe, including its deeds and events, is a flux of thinly grouped protons and electrons in emptiness, and all things are soluble and changeable. It is Idea only. The forgiveness of sins—a most misleading phrase—only means that you compel the old things to cease by making them into new things. No one can do it for you, though those who know the truth can inspire you—which is another form of force.”

“Shall I *ever* understand?”

“Yes. . . . Behind all this knowable wonder lies the Unknowable, and because you have the Buddha—which means the Absolute—as the root of your own nature, you will certainly evolve into the perception of things as they are in truth. You are in what I may call the stage of incubation now, and because the conditions here are very favorable owing to Arima sama’s personality I think it will not be long to wait.”

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She looked up eagerly. “Why does personality matter so much? I know it does,

but why?”

“Because it is a form of force. Your Tennyson says, ‘We are but broken lights of Thee’—which if he means the Absolute is true. But some are central suns round whom others revolve, and though it could never be shown to the eye or told in words, Arima sama is of these. He generates force in others. You will remold what you call your past, and then you will know what all faiths call the joy of the woman whose sins are forgiven.”

It was not till afterwards that she wondered whether lie had used that illustration because in its beauty it was universal, or because he saw into the very springs of her thought? At the moment it mattered nothing. She looked at him with the helpless hope of a man dying of thirst when water is set by him and he cannot raise his hand to take it. “Make me drink. I cannot!”—was what it seemed to say. He saw and understood.

“These things are difficult to grasp even though, as you told me, you studied physics

at the university. It is difficult to connect them up with Buddhist philosophy, because to the Western mind philosophy and physics are only beginning to unite. To us Asiatics it is simple, because these things were the knowledge of our remote ancestors. But study will prepare the way for what we call Enlightenment. A great light—and then you will see and know.”

The words recalled Eleanor’s dream. She took her letter out and laid it in his hand. He read it with interest and giving it back, said slowly:

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“A good illustration. The burden itself becomes flame that illumines. And I am glad she sends you to me as Arima sama has done. Believe me, all will be well.”

The calm impersonality of his tone had no reservations behind it. It was not difficult to accept his help without any sentimentality. She thought with a pang half joy, half pain, that he was meeting her with the detachment of a physician before whose skill human

emotion is resolved into the pure aloofness of abstract science. She could not have worded what she felt, but the fact that he treated her as a problem rather than a woman made it easy to be treated. That attitude challenged her stronger qualities of nature and education. She began with an effort, but presently it was not difficult.

“I can’t understand all you say yet, but I think it means that there’s a law which makes people make themselves instead of expecting to have it done for them.”

He smiled.

“Exactly. Dante called it the law that moves the world and the other stars. Since your consciousness is—let us call it—a part of that vast consciousness, you can be a realizing part of it the moment you are ready. And then you can do as you please, for your strength is the strength of the universe. What can hurt or hold you?”

She clasped her hands in each other and

asked the age-old question.

“What must I do to be free?”

“Follow the rule here. That was what you came for. Train your body, mind, and the consciousness in you until the three, fusing their strengths, transcend their separate strengths. I think you should work in the fields with Sayoko. You both got a little soft during the voyage, and so did Scott and I. You should live as we do, only take the vital foods, not dead ones like meat. But eat enough and do not drink our green tea nor smoke. Scott is the only one who smokes here, and he is dropping it. You cannot need any kind of soothing or stimulant like alcohol or tobacco. And work up your jujutsu, first with Sayoko and then with others. May I tell her to talk only Japanese with you? There is so much English here that you cannot learn it otherwise. Divert your mind from any images of fear or shame. Meet them with mental jujutsu. It exists, and that is one reason why we lay weight on learning the physical judo. And another important thing. Crowd your

mind with beauty. Beauty is truth, as one of your own poets has said. Arima sama calls it the Rose of the World, the Rosa Mystica, and says it flourishes best in the soil of austerity. Come to all the lectures in the hall. If you can think or write anything beautiful, share it with us. Will you begin work tomorrow? Sayoko wishes to.”

He stood up as if the talk were ended, then added:

“Only one thing more. Don’t be frightened when things go wrong or you feel depressed. That happens more or less to everyone. But you will work tomorrow?”

She had only time to say, “Gladly,” before he bowed and was gone with quick steps up to the garden. It seemed that they had been talking only for five minutes, and yet already her outlook was changed and the star of hope had risen in midnight skies. “Fear. If one could conquer fear!” she thought. And again: “If one could only conquer love too. It confuses everything. I don’t know whether I

believe because it's true or because I love him with my heart and soul and strength. He is what I believe in. Does that make true belief?"

She sat considering this for a moment and recalling every word he had uttered. Dante—he had quoted the great line that completes the *Paradiso* with perfect glory.

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“The law that moves the world and the other stars.”

No—that was not right. It is:

“The *love* that moves the world and the other stars.”

Had he done it purposely? Is not love the law by which the universe is swayed? Is love not only an emotion but a primal force? Then, if so, who can conquer it? Neither time nor death nor many waters. It must be used like other forces—nobly; and all is said.

She rested awhile, her mind in a kind of amazement at the new thoughts flowering in the bare garden of her soul. Arima had his garden. It surrounded her in a marvel of beauty suggesting infinitudes of space and sunshine. "But I have my garden too," she thought. "And if his took time to make mine will take longer."

Presently the thought of Maxwell's letter recurred. Surely it was folly to carry that branding shame about with her to vibrate discord through all her thoughts! She tore it across and crumpled it to fling it into the river, but no—why soil that flowing light! She lit a match and spreading the letter out let it burn until the flame scorched her fingers, then scattered the black ash to the wind.

Next day a new life began, and a painful one. She missed smoking horribly, and her nerves jumped, though even to Bridget she would not admit it. She missed the frequent green tea which had come so naturally and deliciously from the bushes in the garden. But she held on, finding an austere reward in the

thought that this was Ito's wish, even if 267
it meant no more than that. If she lay
awake at night knowing that a couple of
cigarettes would send her to sleep, it was
easier to get up and walk in the mysterious
moonlit garden hearing the muted voices of
the night than to surrender the citadel of
resolve.

If Bridget said anxiously next morning, "You
look that tired, my lamb! Why wouldn't you
lie down and take a bit of a sleep instead of
running up to fight Miss Sayoko? I declare
you're thinning away like a wisp of mist in
the trees"—it was easy to laugh it off.

"Well, I was much too fat, Bridgie. You
know you had to let my things out on board.
Now I must be off!"

Early every morning she went up through
Arima's garden to the jujutsu room, which at
that hour Sayoko and she had to themselves.
Often she passed Arima in the garden, hard at
work, but he never spoke though he bowed
when he happened to see her. As far as she

was concerned he appeared to be clay with no fire glimpsed of the jewel hidden beneath it. And yet she could never forget that first day and the compelling power of his strange hidden voice and heavy eyes. Once, also, she saw him turn swiftly and look at one of his men who had answered a question carelessly, as it seemed. Nothing was said, but the man turned deadly pale and stood rigid until Arima's look released him. His retreat had the suggestion of crawling, and she could understand nothing of it all except that here was a master who did not visibly teach yet who affected everyone as he would by his personality. She said something of the sort timidly to Ito, and he smiled and did not answer.

She thought Japanese reserve was growing on him also under the influence of Arima, and yet he was the only man with whom Arima talked when working hours were over. They sat much under the willow, and passing 268 it she would see the glow and fire of their talk and long to hear and understand.

But work—and detestable work—was her portion. After jujutsu she and Sayoko went always to their allotted plot where vegetables were grown for general use. The work was carefully chosen for them—enough to demand their strength. Not so heavy as to overtax it. Hateful work it seemed to Yasoma, meaningless except for what it produced, unexpected, unworthy of the cloistral calm in which she had believed she would give her mind to abstruse psychic revelations. She had expected a sort of oriental Oxford, of course less dignified, but with constant relays of professors and a paraphernalia of papers and examinations. Had not Ito spoken of Arima's science? How else could one hope to learn philosophy? But if it had not been for her first strange experience, now rapidly becoming dream-like, she felt herself to be consciously learning nothing but what Ito called "the science of the beautiful" in literature and art, and this from the starting point of belief in an Absolute Beauty of which these earthly representations were the shadow and reflection. How little she had known what to

expect when she escaped so blindly from London! The interest of it all was extraordinary. It fed a flame that had always burned within her; but where did it lead?

Arima had a small but beautiful collection of family treasures such as sword guards, incense-burners, writing dishes, and exquisite old netsukes with a fine piece or two of old Korean celadon. Sometimes these or a few choice pictures and color prints owned by Ito and himself were brought into the Meditation Hall in the late afternoons, and Arima would sit by silently while Ito explained their histories and relation to each other and to the spirit of China and Japan. That was enchantment and none the less because of Arima's strange presence and brooding silence—

“The marble image of a mind for
ever

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Voyaging through strange seas of thought
alone.”

Ito's diamond-clear brilliance of thought and

phrase were in relation to Arima as the lightning playing over a piled-up thunder-cloud. Yasoma often anxiously dissected her feeling about Arima. Neither liking nor disliking had anything to do with it, but he was a disturbing influence that startled her always. She could not center in forgetfulness of Arima even when Ito was present. Always she must consider how what was said affected him, and hope that he would break silence. But on these occasions he never did. Nor could she see him now without recalling her first vision of the mighty Rameses seated fourfold at Abu Simbel with vast hands couched on vast knees above the flowing of the Nile. That was the likeness which had haunted her from the first—the heavy brows and level eyes and full curved lips of power—never was any man who lived less on the insidious nectar of dream! His cold mountainous nature had its hidden fires, and the thought of their breaking loose was terrifying.

But was she gaining anything from him?
After that first talk with Ito it was made very

clear that even he was to be no visiting tutor to lead her by the hand to attainment. He spoke seldom to her and nearly always when others were present. The method was that used with all seed, sown by the indirect cultivation of the best powers of the mind. Yasoma, familiar with Western methods, began to be obliged to own that it was a better, more developing way than that of feeding minds pigeon-fashion with digested facts, and demanding comment which really involved no exercise of anything but memory. But beyond that point her complaint was that she had no psychic experiences of her own. She read Eleanor's letters again and again to stimulate her hopes, ordered books on Zen Buddhism from Tokyo, and using her university training mastered all the history and facts until no point—270—excepting only experience—had escaped her. She wrote a paper on the doctrine of Enlightenment which she submitted with inward pride to Ito, feeling it to be immensely clever. He passed it to Arima while she walked with head in air until Ito returned it penciled across by Arima, "But does this

really take us anywhere?”—and with a recommendation of his own to spend less time in reading and more in meditation. It was easy to gather that they thought it a book-made parrot performance, which indeed it was. But it would have scored well at Oxford! She tore it across and did not repeat the exhibition. She was trying meditation to order, but could not steady her thoughts for two minutes together.

“I can’t do it!” she said wearily to Ito. “It tires me to death. Perhaps I could write something original if I had time. But three hours of field work cuts the day in two, and one can’t do much after that. I hate the field work.”

He only answered:

“One can live without originality but without food one cannot, and you have plenty of time before you. Also, work and meditation are two vital necessities in Zen. If you rebelled against them you could not be here. It would be meaningless.”

She turned away, bitterly disappointed with more than his words. If he would have helped her to finger her spiritual muscles and count the steps of her progress she would have done much better! But there was nothing of that. She must depend upon herself. She was obliged, however, to own that the corroding misery of her relation with Maxwell was dying down from flame to ashes and that there were days when she did not even remember it. Was that good or bad? Certain Western moralists would say remorse was a wholesome companion. She did not dare to ask Ito any more.

Hateful work—weeding! True, Ito would sometimes come along and stand by them for a minute to point out the far-away glitter of the sea, far below, glimpsed through a blue downward rift in the hills, or the impenetrable green fastnesses of the pines feathering with delicately serrated edges against skies of crystalline blue.

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That was lovely. He left always something of *yugen* behind him—the certitude that these

were only hieroglyphs of the true meaning of Nature ceaselessly at work and eternally at rest in her inmost being. But who could word it? Not even such poets as Bashō, though here as everywhere the poets are seers—the inspired children of the universe. Once Ito quoted three famous lines, brief as famous:

“It was the new moon’s light.
Since then I have watched and waited.
And now—tonight!”

“Does that seem little to a foreigner?” he said. “Yet it is the measure of your understanding of *yugen*. Cannot you feel the silence before the full moon flinging off her last raiment stands revealed in pure glory? You should feel it though—or because—his voice breaks under it. If not, learn the art of condensing. The half is greater than the whole. The Greeks said that, but in Japan we have always practiced it. And why? Because here we can always count on the *yugen* in man, the *yugen* in nature—deep calling to deep. Buddhism teaches it inevitably. All *absolute* art. You miss that in Europe. The

people do not realize *yugen*. I think that to admit this may pronounce the eventual doom of democracy. It kills art. All is said.”

He went off with his light swinging step, and Sayoko looked respectfully after him.

“He does not care if we do not understand,” she said. “We are to feel—not understand. But he must be right. The animals also have *yugen*. They rejoice in nature as many of us do not; the persons with hearts and faces as dull as an English bun! And are these to rule the world?”

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She looked up from beneath a peasant’s blue handkerchief sensibly tied over and round her little round head. Sweat drops were running down Yasoma’s forehead and into her eyes. She rubbed them away irritably.

“Why didn’t I think of a handkerchief myself? I will, tomorrow. Disgusting work for women! I wanted to learn—not to weed or hoe. What good is it? Any idiot can do that!”

“Perhaps not well!” said Sayoko, sitting on the loose earth and crinkling with laughter. “Also it may be another sort of learning, Soma sama. My honorable uncle is very wise.”

“Well, I hate it so that I think I shall tell him I won’t do it any more.”

Sayoko’s eyes twinkled in their oblique lids.

“Are you tired or cross, Soma sama? *I* thought this morning that your body grows very strong at jujutsu—and I think my honorable uncle does not care to put swords into the hands of weak people. Were you so strong in London?”

Yasoma reflected. No. In London she had been a healthy young woman—that was always allowed and she was proud of it. But certainly she could not have lifted heavy pails of water over loose earth and stooped, weeding and picking stones, by the hour. She had tried at first to work in gloves to save those almond-white hands with beautiful pink

nails, the fine flower of much tending and pampering. But gloves got in the way, and no one at Naniwa seemed to think of hands as subjects for lyrics. They were useful implements, and that was the only beauty recognized. Now she lifted them from the hoe handle and looked at them angrily.

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They were small still and beautifully shaped, but earth clung about them, and they were burned to a golden tan to match her bare arms and face and the V her loose dress made at the throat. In the old days she and her friends lay on expensive beaches in expensive sunshine to secure that golden tan. They paid large sums to costly hotels and rushing Blue Trains reserved to carry expensive idlers from London and New York to an aristocratic sun who reserved his rays for the rich. Well—sunshine was thrust upon her now, and the ridiculous little glass standing on the mats at the temple was so small that she could not properly see the results. She said as much, laughing.

“But I can tell you, Soma sama,” said the Japanese girl, still sitting and chuckling, “I think only a fashionable painter would have wanted to paint you in London. You were pale and that made your eyes shine, but the picture would be a face like ladies on chocolate boxes and—”

Yasoma aimed a handful of weeds at her. “You impertinent mouse!” But Sayoko went on contentedly:

“Now you are as strong as the Brocade-Weaving Goddess who runs through the woods painting the leaves in autumn. I think if a pine tree could shape its *yugen* into a woman it would look like you—dark and slender and golden. And now, let me tell you—yes, I will tell you! My honorable uncle and Ito sama told me long ago to be gentle with you, for I must not tire you in our walks and I must be kind and careful with you in jujutsu. But now—look at your arms! You are as strong as I, and every morning I have to use strength as well as skill against you when we walk and play. You are strong now as the

girls that run about in the woods after the Greek goddess—I forget her name.”

“So you were pretending I was a 274
decent hand at jujutsu!” said Yasoma
half choked with rage. The little Japanese had
been her tutor too—playing with her,
condescending. Her anger took a reckless
tone. “Oh, I suppose I’m an ass. Yes—it’s
nice to be strong and to know one’s superiors
approve. But what’s the good of anything
when there’s no one to see? Now in London
—”

That was an indiscretion which delivered her to the enemy. She was rewarded by seeing Sayoko curl up into more than Japanese reserve. It was a suddenly applied closure.

“I did not think an English lady did things to be seen. We do not here,” she said, and settled down again to her stone-picking, adding only: “We are talking English and not Japanese as we were ordered. Now we will not talk at all.” She became a little mask of silence.

Chapter Seventeen

Nearly a month went by and there was little outward change except the deepening loveliness of spring in the heights. Scott remained away, mysteriously as it seemed to Yasoma, for his absence increased the pressure of work upon Ito until she thought the day a happy one if she had seen him run past her with a quick smile and wave of his hand on his way from one task to another. She thought this cruel of Arima in more ways than one. Why had he promised that Ito should teach her if there were never a moment together? Why did he never say a helpful word himself? Sheer waste of time for her!

One day she went down through the garden.

In her dark blue cotton dress, bare-armed and bareheaded, her earth-stained face and hands like those of a peasant girl, she might easily have been mistaken for one but for her air of delicate strength and resistance. Arima raised himself from work to face her as she came down the steep way into his garden. The look he fixed upon her was dagger-keen, as she came on so deep in her own discontented thoughts that she had not realized his presence, and he considered her with the silent attention of a master concentrated on a problem. To those who do not understand, the detachment of Zen is cruelly impersonal. To him she was neither a woman nor beautiful but only an ignorance which must eventually be transformed into knowledge, and his feeling was tinctured with nothing that the world calls affection though in the depths it centered on the love which is expressed in every thought. Outwardly “the opening of the mind-flower” was her only relation to him, though to secure that for her he would gladly have died—as the world counts death. But he could wait. Her future was clear to him as her past and present. He

had let her pass so often without any notice but a bow that she expected nothing more now and was going on. She had ceased to hope for sympathy and directions from him, and her only thought at the moment was that she wished she had courage to complain to him of the field work.

“You do not like it?” he asked abruptly. She halted and answered with equal abruptness:

“No, I don’t like it.”

He faced her, leaning on his spade. “You do not find it injures your health?”

“No. Not that. I only hate it.”

There was a moment’s silence. A little stone bench was near but he did not ask her to sit though she was obviously tired.

“I have something to say to you. You would not be here if you did not wish to know the truth of what the universe means and yourself with it. You know you have never seen into

your own nature. You look at it as a child sitting above a roaring whirlpool sees the waters foam and circle and knows no more. Yet it has a meaning, and without understanding that meaning you are helpless. Is this not true?”

“It is true.”

“Very well then! What says Bodhidharma? ‘If your Self is not yet clearly comprehended go to a wise teacher and gain a thorough understanding of the root of birth and death. Until he knows this a man is a fool unfit to be trusted with his own destiny or that of others.’”

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He looked at her with a hard challenging look, rousing opposition purposely. It succeeded. She flushed crimson with anger.

“Teaching? What teaching do I get? I haven’t seen a thing to draw me to anything high. Ito sama talked to me once. The lectures are beautiful, but I could have those in England and as good. You talk of Enlightenment, but

where does it come from? I could wait and work forever if I knew that. I think you don't like me. You do nothing for me.”

He looked steadily into her face.

“Enlightenment—that is truth-seeing—lies all round you for the taking. You must grow to the point when you are capable of sight. If you have not seen into your own nature what is the good of thinking of what the world calls holy things, reciting the scriptures or keeping the precepts? Certainly such deeds will bear fruit. Your intelligence will brighten. Deeds of charity bring happiness. But all this is walking in the palace garden. It is not entering the palace as its lord. Deeds belong to this illusive world and are themselves illusive. Did not Paul of Tarsus say, ‘Though I give my body to be burned it profits me nothing’? The real world is solely Love, Joy, and Wisdom, the Three in One of which all the Trinities of all the faiths are symbols. When you know this, not with knowledge but realization, you have received *satori*—Enlightenment and all power in the

real world is yours. For you know that you also are Love, Joy, and Wisdom—and what can stand against it? What should I ‘do’ for you? If you cannot light your own lamp you will remain a cloud of darkness in a universe of light.”

There was another silence. He seemed to her excitement to hover over her like an angry cloud about to burst in thunder. 278
But a dim sense of his meaning invaded her. She was to acquire a new point of view of life and the universe. But how—*how*? Trembling she said:

“Once I did a horrible thing—I must not tell you. But it was then I felt something in me like a flash of light. I don’t know what it was, but it drove me out of the life I was living, and I think if I could understand that flash it might be the truth of myself.”

“And of more. You are not the first who must bless a vile thought which had its revulsion. Escape to the world of Love, Joy, and Wisdom, and your deed cannot follow you

there. It is a dream which dies outside the dark atmosphere of the imagined earth. Now I will say that, as snowflakes fall on snowflakes and so make the thundering avalanche, you develop. You cannot feel physical strength grow, but you can now do what would have broken you before. So with the mind. And if you continue the disciplined life Truth will find you.”

He remained gazing piercingly at her as if to drag some answer from her heart. The dark power in his eyes was compelling, not in bending but in stimulating her will and intelligence. At last she said:

“I accept this. I will work and be patient. You mean that when I have seen the Vision my deeds will all be Its manifestation, not mine. And you mean that the universe is a harp of many strings of which each string is a separate music-maker and the whole only one harp. I as a string must be lost in the whole that the music may be made. Yet without me the music could not be.”

“True, so far. Without you, no music. And you say well that your deeds will then have reality, for when you understand you will see that the real world and the world revealed by our senses are in reality not different things but different aspects of one and the same thing. But on this I cannot speak until you have experienced it. Will you consider this and find the meaning? Sit alone for a while today. Breathe deeply—and consider.”

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“I will,” she said slowly. “But you talk of Paul of Tarsus and long-ago wisdom. Why don’t things happen today?”

“They happen incessantly but are not spoken of. When you understand you will not send a paragraph to the paper to announce it. Yesterday one of our men here came to me. He said: ‘Last night I had a lightning flash. I was meditating on the question you asked me a month ago—“Who carries this lifeless corpse of yours?”—and suddenly I knew. I felt as if boundless space were broken up in bits, and the great earth were leveled away. I

forgot myself. I forgot the world; it was like one mirror reflecting another. I was no more deceived as to the marvelous processes of transcendental wisdom. Now, may I go out and work?' He was gone in an hour. 'I am all-sufficient to myself,' he said, when he went rejoicing down the hill."

For a moment she felt as though caught up in the whirl of the garments of some Vastness striding swiftly past her. Then unexpectedly to herself—a sudden weariness. Her knees trembled.

"I think I am too tired to understand it today; I'll try again, Arima sama. When does Mr. Scott come back?"

It appeared strange to her that she should ask that question of the man whom of all others she dreaded, who had shown her the least kindness, to whom the weakness of womanhood made no appeal. What should he care for the loneliness to which the sight of a friendly face would be sunshine? Nevertheless she asked it. Arima picked up

his spade and looked at her.

“And why must you know? I think you should now rest and after you have eaten meditate upon the subject I have given you.”

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Bitterly ashamed at this dismissal—bitterly angry with herself for her unanswered question she went slowly away. Arima called after her.

“Will you go and rest awhile in the room where I sit? Go in at the open door. No one will disturb you.”

There was command in his voice, and though she would have preferred to refuse she went up to the little house and, taking off her earth-clogged shoes at the door, went quietly into the room beyond.

It was large—for at the moment the sliding screens were pushed back and it ran through the depth of the house; the back window commanding the dark pinewood with the

roofs of the Hall of Meditation; the front, the garden. Thus the two planes were represented—that of meditation and that of activity; and strangely enough the atmosphere of the room was profound meditation though his figure seen through the window was energetic as that of a man paid for daily labor. It seemed that he never paused even to take breath, and so it had been whenever she saw him except when he listened to Ito. But a very different impression was given by his room.

She looked about the room next—trying to find some index to his powerful and strange character. Perfect simplicity, sparse and austere even for Japan, but also shining purity and cleanliness. The sitting-cushions on the mats were covered with poor enough stuff but it was purple, beautiful in color and design, the little floor-tables were of fine lacquer—an old family possession. But it was when she looked at the walls that they appeared to melt into dream, so noble was the picture that hung upon one—one only; though in a little recess she saw three long narrow boxes evidently indicating that he allowed himself

the luxury of changing the pictures with the seasons. On another shelf were books, Japanese, English, and Chinese. The atmosphere was exquisite. Great words surged in her heart—beauty, power, majesty—as she looked. The picture struck the keynote to which all the vibrations of the room responded obediently.

It was in monochrome: a long hanging picture unusually wide, painted on silk and hung on heavy ivory-tipped rolls. A thing to consider long and earnestly. She pulled a cushion before it and sat down. Not even in her father's collection was one more beautiful.

A marvelous scene in the heart of the unknown beauty of China—a forest climbing up mountains until, exhausted, it could cling no longer to the splintering rocks. A solitary pine or two had ardently outstripped the rest and stood bathed in the glory of contemplation. There were clouds in the sky of dragonlike shapes, and birds in full flight at great altitudes, with a few human figures

which, escaping the pines, crawled and crept up the great perpendiculars of the mountain past rushing torrents and unspeakable clefts and ascents. One singular peak half lost in mist fixed her eyes as centering the mystic meaning of the picture, which, indeed, in itself appeared to collect and focus all aspiration.

It interested her profoundly and she sat lost in contemplation, recalling in drifts like the perfume of a flower borne on breezes the *Nō* play of Yamauba, the singer who is also the aged and youthful Spirit of Life. These were the woods, the star-crowned peaks, the terrible solitudes wherein she wandered seeking an answer from Nature to the Eternal Question. The song shaped itself in her ears—it moved like a wind of the spirit through the closed chambers of her heart. Had she heard the story or did it grow within her consciousness from some hidden root? It was there as she looked at the picture.

Centuries and centuries ago the
greatest painter of China, Wu Tao-tzŭ,

was given a commission by the Emperor, the Son of Heaven. He was bound to no choice of subject. "Paint me beauty," was the only command, and a wall of the palace was put at the artist's disposal for the picture into which the mind of the Emperor should wander free when overcharged with cares of State. So on a certain day word was sent to the Son of Heaven, with the prostrations of Wu Tao-tzŭ, that the work was done. It was a great moment when he entered with his courtiers and was seated, for a veil overhung the picture and none knew what to expect—though all knew it would be worthy of the royal patron.

Wu Tao-tzŭ stood before it and drawing aside the veil disclosed immense spaces vast as the mountain-world itself. Silence in those who saw was his first reward—the silence of men lost in contemplation of a mystery—the Emperor himself leaning his chin on his hand with eyes fixed on the mountains. Time passed, and finally Wu Tao-tzŭ said slowly:

"Look! In the cave at the foot of this

mountain dwells a Spirit.”

He struck his hands together and a door opened in the base of the rocks.

“What lies within is beautiful beyond any words. I ask your Majesty’s permission to show the way.”

And so saying, before their eyes, he stepped into the picture and through the open door. It closed behind him. The court rose angrily to rebuke his insolence, but he was gone, and while the Emperor remained silent, his chin resting on his hand, the picture faded slowly before them like a landscape slowly forgetting its selfhood under approaching dusk, and before them only the empty wall was left.

So men are absorbed into vision—but the secret of creation cannot be handed on. It departs with its creator.

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This picture then was an attempt to reproduce the lost one. It did more. It mysteriously

reconstructed the scene of its begetting and going. “Suddenly, as rare things will, it vanished,” but its spirit remained to influence the girl of another race who sat before it now.

Insensibly, quiet stole over her, deep quiet in which all her being shared. The picture flickered, became luminous, took on life; no longer a picture it seemed to her that like Wu Tao-tzŭ she had stepped into it with silent feet, and Arima’s room was now a picture behind her.

Strange. She had been there before. She crossed the roaring mountain torrent on a little arched bridge and stood in a rough track leading through tumbled boulders to the mountain, but it was later than she had thought, for a golden haze in the clouds indicated a rising moon. But where was the cave in which the Spirit dwelt? Behind any one of the tangled rocks might lie the closed door leading to—what? No fear obscured her mind now as when she crossed the bridge in Arima’s garden. Composed and calm she considered what way it would be possible to

take and remembered with confidence that her body strengthened by work did not fear even the stark climb before her. “For all roads meet at the top. All men keep tryst there,” she thought, and so went on bravely following the upward course of the torrent.

Suddenly rounding a boulder she came upon a man sitting reading in a manuscript covered with Chinese characters. He put it aside at once and rose to meet her—an old man with a face of the highest Japanese distinction though aged and covered with wrinkles, in the midst of which shone bright unclouded eyes.

“You are welcome,” he said. “You walk in the strength of a mental habit which
looses the imagination and enables you
to see true. Therefore you have crossed the
bounds. My picture is a Gate of Beauty.”

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She heard herself thinking—“But the cave? The gate to Beauty? Is it here?”

He heard her also.

“That will come in time. Not yet. Climb a little higher and look out upon the wide and wondrous view. You are free of the bridge now and can return when you will.”

She asked, “But will you guide me?”

“The mountain torrent will be your guide. I am the Warden of the Gate who keeps the way clear. People come and go all day, and there is nothing for me to say, for insight is work—not words. You need no guide.”

She went on alone by the torrent and as she went its varied voices became words in her ears, yet not words but music that set vibrating higher nerves of communication. It was roaring from the heights, charged with the divine energy of the pure snows and stars of the peaks; and for what? To fill the kettles of rich and poor, to turn the wheels that grind the flour of millions, to unloose energies transmitted into all the purposes of life in the lowlands, so that the bread men eat and the wine they drink shall be sacramental—the chalice of the inspiration of Wisdom, the

bread of strength and life. And still she climbed until at last she saw a nest of rocks where the river curved and sprang for another downward plunge, shouting for joy as it leaped into the abyss with a roar of thundering waters. Here she could sit forever and brood upon its mysteries. She dropped into a mossed seat and rest poured through her limbs as the wind of its going fanned her brows and its speed dizzied her eyes—the rush of primal force to joyful tasks waiting below.

And yet its tumult was peace. Wet mosses glistened at her feet; the rocks were everlasting calm unbounded by the ramparts of heaven. A place for meditation. She folded her hands in her lap and looked out over the wide view by the light of a rising moon.

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Mountains and valleys. Vast plains stretching into little villages and beyond them great cities dimmed in smoke, shot through by twinkling lights—how far, yet how near, a handful of fragments of some Unity she could

not yet fathom. It was as though endless wheels could be seen whirring and yet no noise. Their speech has gone out throughout all the earth—yet there is silence among them. Activity so mighty that like the swift revolving of a circle it appears to be at rest. No place for idle reverie—a place for experience, not for abstraction, and for work as wide, as strenuous, as the rush and energy of the primal cosmic forces. “What a man gains in contemplation he must return in work.” The mystic must be of all men most practical. True, he has his education, but when its preliminaries are over—work; work is its aim, and wisdom its end.

“How supernatural, how marvelous my life!
Can it be I? I draw water and I carry fuel!”

Yes, but water thus drawn is the water of the River of Life, and the fuel feeds the fire in which worlds are fused and recast.

Such thoughts flowed smoothly through her mind, engrossing all its powers. Self-consciousness was asleep. What she had done

of foolish or of wise was forgotten. What did it matter in that wide view of myriad-minded life? It was not she who sat here—the very breath as it left her lips took symbolic shapes of joy and courage. The mind was concentrated and the body dissolved, and she did not know how she was supported or whether her feet rested on earth. She moved with the wind like a blown leaf and yet sat gazing into the stream of eternity, and it moved but did not move; and whether she was the wind or blown by the wind she could not tell, for sense was extinguished and it was neither she herself nor another.

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How long she sat she did not know, or whether it was she who rose and breathed in the moonlight and cold air of the water's going. But something had passed into her which declared:

“The very heart of work is peace and vision. Then it becomes cosmic; then it is true work. All else is folly and idle spending of wasted energy. Work and dream, for work and dream are one.”

She climbed through the rocks and downward by the difficult track, and at the foot the old teacher of jujutsu stood on duty. No one else was visible, but something within her was aware of lives coming and going like a wind of faces lit with eyes.

He smiled as she came down, and said:

“The bamboo shadows are sweeping the
stairs
But no dust is stirred.
Still is the air and clear.
The moonlight sinks deep in the water of
the pool,
But no trace is left in the water.”

She understood. Deeds in themselves leave no trace of good or evil. Idea and not the movements of the hands and feet is true energy and action. It is motive alone that counts. Therefore the way to this knowledge and the freedom it insures is to climb the Mountain of Vision and sit beside the fountain torrents of Wisdom. She smiled at him in return and crossing the bridge with

light feet found herself standing in the room, gazing with absorbed delight upon the picture of Wu Tao-tzŭ.

To reenter personality after freedom is always a closing of the prison doors, but they are never wholly barred and bolted after one escape has swung them on their hinges; and through opened windows Joy darts like a swallow with all the Spring upon her wings. For a while Yasoma sat with her eyes fixed upon the pictured mountain remembering a picture of her own—a mighty portrait of the Chinese sage Lu Chŭ. A legend of the man was written upon it in handwriting as beautiful as the picture:

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Thereupon he tuned two lutes and placed one at a great distance and the other beside him. And when he struck the *kung* note on one the *kung* note on the other sounded. When he struck the *chio* note on one the *chio* note sounded on the other. For both were tuned to the same pitch. But if he changed the interval of one string all the strings jangled.

She said in her own heart: “That is the secret of all magic, all power. Harmony throughout the universe. I have learned my lesson.”

Rising she went to where Arima was beginning a new length of the path.

“It will certainly be a great convenience,” he said as she came. “And we must build a carpentering shop for the many things we need. What have *you* thought of?”

Instantly she caught his meaning. She was not to talk of high and mystic experiences. Vision was not to dissolve in words nor to become reverie. By its outcome she must be judged.

“I have thought I idled for hours in the field. Instead of conquering it, it conquered me. So I have resolved that on any wasted day I will not eat. Why should I? I am not worth food —”

For the first time Arima looked at her with interest.

“A useful thought!” he said. “True *zazen* [Zen discipline] and a fast now and again will do you good. In this way only, the mongrel whom all despised turns into a golden-haired lion whose roar is heard across the world. Did you think of anything else?”

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“I thought that if I cook the food for the men when I have done my own work they would have more time for theirs—their time is more important for they grow the food we eat.”

“Now you are wrong,” said Arima. “All work is equally important, so yours is as good as theirs. But I make no suggestions. Find out for yourself. Anything else?”

“One more thing. I thought that dreaming is only safe in company with hard work.”

“That is excellent. But as you get on in understanding you will know the two are one. Still, I like the notion. Now—we waste time. Is there anything else to say?”

“A question. What is the Way?”

“Now you disgrace yourself! What can I tell you? I don’t know your way. Walk straight on.”

The abruptness did not discourage her. It was the first time that she had talked with Arima with any understanding, and his dry bluntness was like a cold northeaster that calls forth strength and wrestling power.

She thought: “He can help me to help myself now. He could not before. I have begun. I may venture a step further.” And aloud:

“I know you would never let me give money to help the work you and Ito sama are doing.”

“Never. I have never known of a faith to which gifts from rich persons have not been fatal. Why make such a suggestion?”

She said patiently:

“May I finish? My father made a wonderful collection of old Chinese and Japanese pictures. He loved them passionately,

though without understanding why—”

Arima struck his spade into the earth and looked at her steadily.

“I also love those pictures. I have examples of Chao Chang in which the soul of the flower speaks with you. I have the famous ‘Falling River’ of Wu Tao-tzŭ. I have one by Ku K’ ai-Chih which came back to me just now, as I sat in your room, like a divine message. It is the Lute Portrait of Lu Chŭ. And I have others. May I give all that they may be hung here where you will—that the men who come here may see them? I ask this as a favor. I do not say I have deserved it.”

His eyes searched her.

“Do you realize the value of these pictures?”

The first trace of emotion was in her voice.

“Yes. They are a gateway to beauty—a highway to wisdom. They are inspiration and fulfilment. I know their value very well and

that is why I give them.”

There was so long a silence that expecting nothing but refusal she turned to go. His voice recalled her.

“It is because you know the value that I accept this great gift which you do not lose by giving. Had you spoken of their cost— But you have left that behind. Papers shall be drawn up by which they remain yours but we have the use of them. In the name of all here I thank you. The hands that give beauty and wisdom will never be empty of either.”

He paused and added as she turned again:

“There are bread and milk in the room. Go up and get them and sit by the river and eat; you have earned your dinner. Rest for an hour, then I shall see what you can do in jujutsu.”

She ran up the garden and got the food, then finding a quiet place among the rocks by the willow ate the bread and drank the milk with relish. A kind of somber joy

filled her heart because at last she had really spoken with Arima. She would never fear him again, and his sparse almost grudging encouragement was like music in her ears.

That afternoon for the first time Arima came to watch a match between herself and Sayoko. Ito came with him. Sayoko got the better of her for the most part, but she was putting forth all her skill, and Yasoma was not ashamed on the whole of her own show. Still, it was with an anxious heart she awaited the verdict.

First, he and Ito gave them examples of the right way as against their mistakes. Then Arima said to both:

“When I say that your work is good, that is not to deny many faults. When I say you are both at a point where it may be infinitely better I say the truth. Go on, with courage.”

That evening Yasoma marched down the track as if to drum-taps. Next day a cable went to England, and in a week the pictures

under expert care were on their way.

Chapter Eighteen

That talk with Arima had given her courage and insight which made it possible to endure Ito's silence and preoccupation. She needed both, for anything which set her apart from him was a kind of spiritual death. There indeed she questioned the judgment of Arima. "I could not hurt him, for I could never reach him, but he could make me live. I shall never touch Vision but through him." Yet she worked on in a fashion—like a blind man feeling his way in a dark world, repeating her saying to Eleanor: "If they are right nothing else matters. If they are wrong nothing matters at all." And so the weeks went by.

She and Sayoko had undertaken to mend the

men's clothes, and Bridget had offered her powerful aid.

“And sure how they got on without us the Lord knows, for I don't!” she exclaimed, sitting over a pile of garments so poor and worn that it required the eye of faith and the hand of accomplishment to see any possibility of resurrection. Many of the men were as poor as any Japanese student in the empire, which is saying much, and though they had done their best much remained to be done. It forced the question on Yasoma's mind as to whether she could venture to offer better, and she propounded it to Bridget, the only person whom she dared consult. On Bunyan's authority Bridget strongly opposed any such benevolence.

“For when Christiana and Mercy was 292 traveling the road sure they had grand new clothes given to them in the Interpreter's House—‘raiment white as snow,’ it was!—but look who gave it! Sure 'twas the Interpreter himself and a lass called Innocence. Now, if anyone no better than

themselves gave them charity they couldn't look at it and give nothing back. I know your will is good to give, my lamb, but that isn't all there is to it. Sure a man or woman must be near as big as the Interpreter before good folks aren't ashamed to take from him. Money's a queer thing. You can pull a man up a hill or take off your coat to give him, but if 'tis only money the two of you's the worse for it often. No, no. They work for us and we'll work for them, and that's all there is to it."

This struck Yasoma as the germ of a truth. She considered and wishing to probe further, said:

"But you often let me give you money for poor people? Must I never give it now?"

"But you didn't know anything then, Miss Soma, one way or the other—and you didn't care a snap—and sure the creatures couldn't wait for a dinner till you knew better! Now you're beginning to open your eyes I think 'tis as well not, till you know yourself what's

best to be done.”

“And I don’t know yet? Well, that’s true enough!”

So it ended, and Bridget sat sewing enormously in the temple garden and holding conversations with the acolyte who, like the stewardess on board the Hana Maru, was impassioned for English and extremely communicative in what he knew already.

Arima remained engrossed as ever in his work, and often, lost in labor forgot to notice her as she passed. She wavered between two opinions, one, that he entirely forgot her existence; the other, that he was deliberately condemning her to loneliness and silence as a part of discipline, and for that reason 293 had forbidden Ito to speak to her.

Whichever it was it must be accepted, but her heart sprang from its torpid dulness into feverish joy when one evening as she was leaving the house of the Arimas Ito came up and joined her.

“I have had a hard day, and it will be a rest if I may walk down with you.”

She smiled, and they began the descent. For a while they spoke of indifferent things, and at last she hazarded a question which had occurred to her that very day:

“Arima sama is a great teacher, and I know all sorts of great people believe in his work. Then why isn't he put at the head of a beautiful monastery like Daiko-kuji? No one could help feeling its loveliness and queer vibrating atmosphere. Thousands would come. All the world would hear.”

He looked down at her with a smile.

“And what would become of Arima sama? He has got far beyond all that. He has seen the essential, and one cannot go back to trifles. What do they say in India?

“Sometimes naked, sometimes mad,
Now as a scholar, now as a fool,
Here as a rebel, there a saint—

Thus they appear on earth—the Freed Men.’

And as for a monastery—he is producing the man who lives in the world and knows it for what it is worth. The men come in like hungry birds for a meal and go off again. But he has left his mark. Yes, Arima sama makes good bread! In every Zendō the way of education differs from what it is outside, but here, I think, it is best of all.”

“Tell me a little about the rules. You see we live outside that—Bridget and I.”

“Certainly,” he said, and looked pleased. They were walking slowly down the hill, facing the swiftly sinking sun after a long day of work—he bareheaded and in well-worn shorts and shirt with grass sandals on his feet; she in her dark-blue cotton frock open at the neck and short-sleeved. She wore a peasant’s handkerchief now, tied about her head like Sayoko’s, and found it useful. They walked slower to make the short way long.

“Well, men may come at any age. The first rule is work—actual physical production for our support. That is the only fee. You have seen that—sweeping, cleaning, tilling, raising rice and vegetables, tea-growing, begging if necessary, but that has not been necessary, for we make enough and with the tiny surplus we have a fund for men who are to go out into the world. The rule is ‘No work, no eating.’ Your Paul of Tarsus said the same thing. Never be an idler. We see the harm where idling is allowed even under the cloak of religion. We find it is disgraceful to live on other people’s work—and be idle.”

“Even for a woman?” she put in eagerly.

“Certainly. Why is a woman to be an idler? She deserves better than that.”

For a moment Yasoma lost his speech—she was reflecting thankfully that she had followed Bridget’s advice and had kept her money to herself. But was it her money? Not a sixpence of it had she ever worked for, not a circumstance of how it was created and

continued flowing in was known to her. Questioned at that moment she could not have said whose work in what country provided her with needs or luxuries.

“You see,” said Ito, “in our way of thinking we have to transcend both body and mind, so naturally the nerves and muscles must learn to obey. Unless the body is strong and well thought itself may become a hazy luxury, a narcotic to the will. It has often been so in India. We don’t want hallucinations. Tell me in turn—how has your health reacted to your work? Tell me exactly.”

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“Then—exactly—I am very much stronger. I can lift weights, walk, stoop, run. Yes, life is different. I think I could help to coal a ship like your women at Nagasaki.”

“It is good work if one is strong enough. And then you eat much more simply here. Is that good or bad?”

“I should think I do,” she said laughing, as

visions of London dinners, ball suppers, cocktail parties, ran across her memory. “Yes, this is good. I delight in it. And I don’t miss smoking now.”

“I am glad. *Our* rule is to eat three times a day—in the early morning while it is dark, at ten and at seven P.M. In India men like ourselves eat only once a day before noon, but that is a matter of climate. In the dawn we have rice and pickled plums. At ten rice mixed with barley, vegetable soup, and pickled plums, and bean-curd. And at seven o’clock we have anything that is left of the dinner. But that is Arima’s rule. It is easier in the world.”

“But I have had milk and eggs and all sorts of luxuries like that at the temple and at Sayoko’s house.”

“Why not? It is for you to choose. There is no insistence. And when you wish this were a Zen monastery with Arima sama at the head remember you could not then be studying here. It would be impossible. But he thinks

rules are made for men and women, not men and women for rules. You have heard the gong at meal-times? Don't you know what we do? We come into the hall carrying our bowls—three or four one inside another. We don't talk while we eat. First a scripture is recited, and we consider it. When we want more we fold our hands, and the one who is serving fills the bowls again. Nothing is to be left in them when we have eaten—we gather up the fragments. Then hot water is brought, and each man's largest bowl is filled with water in which he washes his chop-sticks and any other bowls he has used. Then each of us says—do you care to hear?"

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“Very much. But I'm thinking how strange it must seem to you after your life in London when you knew everyone and went everywhere to rich houses.”

“Not strange, really. That did me no harm, for all the time my mind was fixed on this. And I may have to go back to it one day. I owe London very much. It taught me what the civilization is worth which we have followed

so eagerly in Japan. But what we say after eating is this:

“I have now finished eating and my body is well nourished.

“My will-power can shake the quarters of the world and dominate past, present and future.

“Turning both cause and effect to the general good of all beings, may we all unfailingly gain in the supernormal powers.”

“I like that,” she said. And then slowly: “I wish I were a man.”

“No doubt that will come in future rebirth. You may have often been one in the past—may be again! In different lives we go through all the classes, and men and women have different strengths and weaknesses in which to be tested. However—we have, as you know, lectures, and there is also the mental discipline of meditation and concentration. We meditate much in the night—and at a certain hour in the day, and during

certain months we have in each a week of meditation.”

“It’s a hard life. Too hard for many.”

“Hard, yes, in a way. But a few years of discipline are invaluable to a man. It is growing rare in East and West, and the loss cannot be told. You must have hard training to produce the strong virtues. It used to be said that when a lioness gives birth to her cubs she pushes them down a precipice to see if they can climb back to her. The ones who cannot are left to their fate. That is Zen.”

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“Do men ever go back to ordinary life?”

“Why not? Our men always do. But they will carry our stamp all their days. It marks. You know that if you went back today you would never forget. ‘You have lifted the curtain of silence and eaten the lotus of dream.’ The world can never again be the same to you.”

She could not answer—the beautiful words struck on some sensitive nerve of beauty. It

was true—and marvelous that she should have achieved so much. If she could not make it her own, at least she had seen.

“Blessed are they who have seen,” also. They stood a moment looking down on the fair faint sparkle of the sea between the rifts of pines—liquid gold in sunset.

“If I could only understand it!” she said at last, with passion. “If anyone would explain! I don’t know how one breaks through, or why or how it happens—and yet I want to know; I want it above any earthly thing. Arima sama—you—John Scott—what have you found that makes the world seem nothing? Explain to me!”

He answered smiling:

“How can your reason or anyone else’s stretch to the infinite? and earthly language express the things not of earth? See, you have picked a flower—can you tell the secret of its life? If you could it would give you the universe. To break through—as you call it—is not to understand with your reason. That is

a function of your mortal brain and lives and dies with it. It can be crippled by a blow or a fall. Let me tell you a story—it is of a Moslem, but all who see are one. He saw a child coming to him holding a lighted torch and asked where the light had come from. The child blew it out and said, ‘O Hassan, tell me where it is gone now and I will tell you whence it came.’—Do you see?”

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“Yes—but tell me and don’t be angry at my asking—did this come suddenly to you? Had things led up to it?”

“Forgive my not answering. You will know one day that these things must not be spoken of. How did you know it had come? In the same way I shall know when it comes to you, but you will not tell nor shall I need to ask.”

There was a silence which was not painful. It was as though his words were a confidence though he had not answered her question.

He said presently:

“So there you are! But if you like I can tell you one of the great stories on which Zen is based. It illustrates the silent method of teaching. I versified it. Forgive my foreignness.

“The Blessed One sat high among His own
Upon the Peak of Vultures, and there came
Before His quiet feet a Shining One
And laid before those feet a heavenly
flower

Golden of hue, praying that He would
speak

And open unto all the Door of Light
That He had found beneath the Tree of
Trees.

The Blessed One received the golden
flower

Within His hand and sat in utter calm,
But spoke no word. And all the Assembly
mused

What this might mean, and, musing, could
not know.

But Kassapa, awaking from his sight,
Smiled to the Blessed One, as one at rest.
Then softly spoke the World-Honored to

him
Who only knew. ‘I hold within my heart
The Essence of the Mind, the Wondrous
Sight
Given unto all and not in all awake.
And Kassapa, awake, aware, has heard,
Wordless, and, wordless, he has seen the
Light
That needs no words for wings.’”

“Please repeat it—I like it,” she said,
halting; and he obeyed, adding:

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“Enlightenment is the crown and perfecting
of a process which can neither be hurried nor
delayed. Have patience. There is another
way. Some of the Zen masters set those
difficult problems of which you have heard.
They, as it were, explode the higher
consciousness into activity. But that will not
be your way.”

“How will it come to me?” she asked
breathlessly.

He looked at her, reflecting for a moment and

answered:

“Through love.”

Warm color flushed her face, and though her lips parted she could not speak for a moment. He stood as though waiting for an answer, and at last and breathlessly she did her best:

“I suppose that or anything beautiful might happen here. If you knew what it seems to me and the difference from the life I lived! But won't that leave its mark on me forever? Imagine a woman with my training doing the beautiful strange marvels I am told of here!”

“If not, what are you here for? You are training for the adventure. As to marvels—certainly. But when you can do them they will not seem any more wonderful to you than eating your breakfast, and you will only do them under the law of their existence.”

“Can you do them too?” Her heart was throbbing with eagerness.

“We do not speak of these things when we speak of ourselves,” he said with a cold touch of reserve. “Surely you can see how that is a kind of indecency in nearly every circumstance? We think that in the West the mystics have been far too explicit and unreserved in what they expressed. They are our spiritual kindred, but we think a dose of philosophy would have rendered their atmosphere wholesomer and less enervating. I am reading now a book by an English mystic of many centuries ago—Julian of Norwich. It is fine vision, but she is too intoxicated with sight, drunk with the wine of the spirit. She does not know what to do with it. More strength and coolness are needed, less personification. I prefer the colder and more austere wisdom of China and Japan. Perhaps it is my national taste, but I think I am right.”

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“I know the book. Mrs. Ascham made me read it. She thought the same. It seemed a thing for cloistered undersexed women—passionate but not strong.”

“Do you know how strong women can be? Zen has attracted them and tempered their intellect and spiritual muscles until they are hard as steel. But you were speaking of marvels. Do you want them and what for? Be frank.”

She meditated before answering:

“I want to be able to annihilate my past. It was hateful. I want to forget it altogether. I want to be able to do miracles with my own mind, to be filled with the sense of power over myself and others. To be able to make them believe.”

“Let us take your wishes in order. You want to forget and annihilate your past. Of course that is impossible until you have escaped into the world of light. Then it will have no more dominion over you. It will have been a stepping-stone to be forgotten when the brook is crossed. As to regretting it and troubling over it—No! Look here!”

He pointed to an abundance of little starry

flowers with leaves of frosted silver covering the bank beside them.

“Not long ago that was a black seed in the blackness of the earth. Worms coiled about it, and it lay in the midst of their cold subterranean work and could not know that that work was good. It knew nothing. Only a blind instinct in its heart cried for the light. That gave it strength and with its weakness and ignorant hope it pushed aside the caked earth, a shoot so weak that a breath could break it. Still it went on piercing. At last—look!”

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He pointed to a green point above the earth so small that it was difficult to see.

“The courage of it!” he said. “Weakness triumphant! But now—seeing the light it rushes to it in a glory of leaves and at last of blossom so lovely that when men see it they stop and consider and are glad. The bank is covered with beauty.”

She stooped and touched one petal softly as a

sigh.

“Yes—you’ve answered that! What next?”

“I hope you realize that worms also are very worthy people,” he said with a laugh. “They could not be spared. Well,—you want instant power to do marvels with your own mind and to knock other people into the Way of Peace; and you are half hopeless, half defrauded because you must wait. You, a young woman who reads scientific books and I believe can even understand a little of Einstein here and there! Ask Arima sama—he is a trained mathematician and has studied physics—whether anything can reach the point of transformation until by regulated stages of development and law it has arrived at a certain point. That applies to you and to these people you want to explode into vision.”

He looked at her with humor, his inscrutable Japanese eyes laughing.

“When two chemicals are to be combined there must be exactly the right proportion of

each to insure the result desired. Otherwise there can not be perfect combination.

Therefore if you do not bring enough—it must wait until you can. Or you may make the wrong combination and lead to distorted results—even terrifying, and at all times dangerous. This accounts for the partial experiences you and others have had.” He paused a moment then went on:

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“Oh, no! You cannot be a sun until you have been several inchoate things first. You must be satisfied with shaping into a satellite. But go on developing—you cannot help it; I think you cannot even retard it now, if you would—and some day you will pierce with a little green shoot above the earth and—I wonder what your blossom will be like!” he ended abruptly and on a tone which had the quality of some obscure emotion.

She had never seen Ito moved before and least of all moved in connection with herself; it startled her. Irrelevantly she said:

“You hated me in London. I felt it in the air

when you came near me.”

He protested with a quick motion of his hand.

“No—not hated, but I disliked being in your presence. Something hostile. Yet I think I did not misunderstand you though it would be impertinence on my part to say why. Also I do not find it is good to discuss personalities. And I should be going. It grows late.”

She stood up also.

“I turn off here. But I ask you one question. Did you think me a bad degraded woman?”

“Bad? Degraded? No. For me those words have little meaning. But I knew you wished to escape from some deed which caused you suffering.”

“You were right,” she said with grief impossible to hide; and he made no reply.

The dusk began its mysterious withdrawal of the world into night, the distant woods softly fading into dimness like a dimming memory

of form and color, and the voice of the stream beside the track spoke more than the wisdom of the wise. She knew that this beauty—and all beauty—was drawing nearer to her understanding day by day. Timidly, like a nymph of the mountains hard to be won from the solitudes, shy and cold but nearer; and that in the moment of union would be hidden bliss beyond earthly imagining. She said a word of this, and Ito replied with a few lines from a *Nō* play. She believed that his very thought was molded into those beloved forms:

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“He bids the flower of spring
Climb the tree top that men may raise their
eyes
And walk on upward paths;
He bids the moon in autumn waves be
drowned
In token that He visits laggard men
And leads them out from valleys of
despair.”

“The Open Book,” he said. “But no—better than any book! All books, all scriptures, are

only a finger pointing at the moon. Why look at the pointing finger? It is better to drench one's eyes in glory.”

They were nearing the turn of the little lane into the temple. The bell hung beside them with its beautiful patina of green and dulled bronze lost in twilight. Almost it seemed to her that she could hear its silent voice vibrating in a finer air than that which touched her lips with cool. She said as much to him, and he answered:

“The voice is not silent, and when you hear the Unstruck Music you will hear also the pipes of Pan, the flute of Krishna, and follow into strange places. But now it is deeply secret. I must return. I have enjoyed the walk, and it will be remembered. *Sayōnara!*”

She stood to see him go, and it was not till he was out of sight that she realized that not the last word only but all the talk had been in Japanese. Amazing. Not for one moment had she been conscious of it, and yet it was now absolute certainty that so it had been. A

lovely magic indeed, for though she had been learning steadily it seemed impossible.

“Has he brought me farther, much farther than I guessed?” she thought as she went slowly up the garden. “Is it his power or mine or both working together? I did not dream it. It was true.”

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A little heavenly joy crept into her heart like the turning ripple of arising tide over bare dry sands. Soon it might be the light and sound of the sea reflecting the broken moonlight and all the stars of heaven.

Late that night when Bridget was soundly asleep and no lights shone from the quarters occupied by the O tera san and his acolyte she pushed back the little sliding door which was all that protected their rooms and pulling a cushion to the moonlit opening sat down and looked out into the shadowy garden trying to re-collect her mind into quiet and to knit together her two experiences. The night was a tranced quiet—Nature following the untracked path of the bird in pure air,

forgetful of her busy children, gone beyond holding or comprehension. In the midst of the ecstasy stood the small temple, dreaming also it seemed. Surely emanations rose from this perfect peace to the mysterious midnight blue of the starred sky? Surely something descended and united with it, forming profound comprehension in which her soul floated like a fish in pure water.

A great star lamped in the south. Ito had told her that its light took four hundred years to reach the earth. Strange things its dwellers would see if they looked down tonight—men and women fighting, loving, plotting, in the dead dreams of four hundred years ago.

“And which is the real Now?” he asked. “Is it what they see or what we see? And what is time? And yet you insist upon believing that deeds are real! They might see your Queen Elizabeth signing the death warrant of Mary Stuart. And did she do it then or now? And where is she? Here or there? And did it happen or is it happening?”

Where indeed were they? Ah, who can tell? Perhaps reborn and acting on the world-stage in greater or lesser parts. Perhaps passing through some intermediate state on the way to reshaping, bewildered by the delusion of hurrying thought-forms they themselves have created. Perhaps a few, a very few, passing along the trackless way of the wise. Perhaps they and their hopes and fears were a fantasmagoria thrown by some ray of cosmic consciousness on a background of cloud. Nothing more—and she herself no more.

Only one certainty. “The way lies straight on. I never saw any man lost in a straight road,” Arima had said to Ito, and this was becoming a conviction for her also.

Light—light! Her very soul cried out for it. Unless the eyes are opened life is darkness and death is darkness. She remembered the verse written by some dead Japanese woman which was the cry of her own bewildered heart:

“Out of the dark
Into a dark path
I must enter.
Shine on me from afar,
Moon of the mountain-fringe.”

The moon—the symbol of the mind in India —of the Buddha later, of wisdom always. Oh, that it would shine on her spiritual eyes as on her earthly ones! She felt it glimmering like the coolness of dew on her closed eyelids. Thought flowing on became indistinct, its outlines faded. Had it become prayer? “Singing go the small waters, silent goes the vast ocean,” and the silence of the world was reflected in the silent soul within her. Certainly she asked nothing either for herself or others, as she remembered when, after a time that was neither long nor short but timeless (for time is but the illusion of thought), she relapsed into existence and looked out upon the quiet once more from the old separateness which views itself as one and Nature another. The old dull morality! But the moment and its memory could never be effaced. They had dyed the

inmost fibers of her being with a new color. They had annihilated certain beliefs in her as though they had never been and left an emptiness where new and very different certainties might come in and dwell.

She wondered if this were the meditation which Arima had enjoined. If so it had possessed her, not she it, and it was clear that for inward health and strength the hours of night and solitude are as vital as sleep itself. She resolved that she would claim them in future.

As she stood up, meaning to go in, an overpowering consciousness of some nearing good gathered round her like rising water. It was inexpressibly comforting and supporting. "I am not alone. I am surrounded." The words almost shaped on her lips. She could hear them, feel the hint strengthening into insistence, and yet the night was breathlessly still—not a sound, not even the chirp of a cricket or the downward drift of a leaf disturbed it.

Then, at long last, she heard steps, very far off up the hill, steps coming swiftly and lightly on the downward way. She needed no telling; she knew, and with an uncontrollable impulse ran down the garden through the flowers drowned in dew, exhaling wet perfume, past the bell and to the clump of bushes marking the meeting of the temple lane and the track outside.

She thrust herself among the bushes and waited, trembling from head to foot, holding the long sleeve of her kimono pressed against her lips lest she should make some involuntary sound.

The step came nearer, and Ito swung into sight, the moonlight full on his face. Thought dissolved in passionate joy almost impossible to endure. She quivered towards him, yet held herself in check. Would he go by without a thought of her, and if so how could it be endured?

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No. He had halted. He stood while she held her breath and knew it would be madness—

would ruin all into hell if she stirred. He stood and looked steadily as if through the trees to the temple, his strong dark face softening into infinite pity and tenderness. He stretched his hands towards it with closed eyes. What thought was working within him? What wave of power and love broke from him to her? She clung half fainting to the little tree, praying for courage to be silent. She would drag no confession from him. He must give or keep as he chose.

The divine moment passed. He turned and went swiftly up the hill, leaving such joy behind him that it seemed the very night had blossomed into colored stars of bliss.

She waited until no sound could reach him and ran up the temple way to fling herself on a cushion by the open door and press her hands against her heart as if to keep it in her breast.

She had never guessed—never dreamed of such a thing. To be made empress of the world would have seemed less impossible.

But he had said that very day that for her Enlightenment would come through love. How else—how else? Surely tonight she had seen something beyond all earthly sight, and it was terror and joy so mingled that she could not tell one from the other, nor care to tell. Words rose in her unlike any she had known before—as drowned things of the consciousness flash up to the surface of thought when a great storm has moved the sea.

“Rise like a windless tide
Unhurried but unlet. Drown all beside
Within thy love’s great deeps that joy and
smart
Become but names, and I nor feel nor hear
Aught, save the deepening joy that thou art
near.”

Chapter Nineteen

When dawn came Yasoma still had not slept.

There was an ecstasy in her that sleep must not dim in those first few hours. For all her new hope of perception was bound up with Ito. His name had been the first pointer to the Way—her love for him had been the hidden fuel of her fire.

She sat by the window—the slides pushed back, her black waves tossed about her face, breathing in the wine of the morning air with rapture. Words she had read went and came from her heart to her lips and seemed the speech of her own inmost life:

“But if I found a man who could believe

In what he saw not, felt not, and yet knew,
From him I should take substance and
 receive
Firmness and form relate to touch and
 view.
Then should I clothe me in the likeness
 true
Of that Idea to which his soul did cleave.”

That was the truth. Now that her own heart with its one compelling motive was clear to her she knew there was nothing which she could not be—no height to which she could not reach to share and fan the flame of his belief.

“This is the meaning of all life. It sweeps one out of oneself and launches one on the Ocean whose farther shores are joy—” she thought.

For with the heavenward climb of the sun had come certainty more shining than any dawn of his love. Yes, and the stronger because he had hidden it in the deeps of his resolute reserve. But his stedfast gaze was revelation, though she realized that if

divine chance had not befriended her she would never have known and in the future might never know more. That must be as his will and strength chose. She who had never obeyed any other living creature knew now the delight of surrender to the beloved and, knowing it, she could wait for ages. "Wait." The very word foretold some far-off fruition and bathed her in a flood of delight almost beyond endurance.

Suddenly with the rush of a great wave salt with tears came remembrance of her own life. How could it mix with his if even that night of horror could be washed out? Miserable pleasures, coarse and vapid, selfish cruelties of the mind, purblind vision never raised to the stars, carelessness of any higher values, vulgarity of thought that left no action beautiful. How could a life so shaped mix with his even in friendship? His words were flashes of light upon the depths of the unspoken. Where words must fail his very presence pointed to something beyond. No dreamer but a knower, who might say in utter truth, "I have spat out the body," in so far as

it had any controlling influence upon his life.

Strange, but it was easier to forgive herself for that one mad moment than for the wasted years which had made it the inevitable outcome of misuse and decay.

And then began the long sophistication of excuse. What chance had she ever had? He must acknowledge that and forgive. Surely the great of soul forgive with more ease and understanding than the petty. And that the past must not control the future is the life-blood of Zen where each new minute is a new birth. It would not be right to tell him all. She had hinted it long ago, and if he had not understood why recall what must wound his very soul? Let the dead past bury its dead. He himself had said that no mad deed should damn the soul to eternal darkness. She had forgotten another Zen saying that it is not the measure of time that marks the reverberation of a deed. What condemns it is the light it throws upon personality.

So with the whole thrust of consciousness she put it from her and chose joy instead of justice. Bridget had put out her bath, and in the earliest shafts of sunlight she splashed the cold hill-water about her and put on a blue cotton frock, fresh and smelling of the wind that had blown it dry. About her black curls and waves she knotted the blue handkerchief, and then more glowing from waking than from sleep took her bread and milk and the egg Bridget boiled for her out under the trees and called Bridget to do the same. They sat together in dappled light and shade, and Bridget's spirits rose a point above her calm content on seeing Yasoma's brave glow and flush in the morning gold. Surely a bird sang in her heart that happy morning! Bridget became vocal.

“We're not to rejoice in the body for it's here today and gone tomorrow, as you might say. But still, Miss Soma, I don't know as I ever saw you look so well in yourself. Didn't I always say 'twas a life would kill a horse in London—what with cocktails and junketing night and day? Now that night you came in

from the dress-up ball—the last ever you went to—you looked that trashed-out that I couldn't sleep for thinking of it. But now—”

She reached out for her beloved teapot. Yasoma looked at her steadily. It stung. Bridget continued:

“And I says to myself—if the Lord and Mrs. Ascham can't do something the child'll 311 be ruined body and soul betwixt and between them fools in London and their rackets. But 'tis all right now, thanks be! and you've got a color in your cheeks and lips that's better than all the grease the women in London do be putting on themselves night and day.”

The leaves fluttered softly on the newly born breeze and had the talk to themselves for a moment. Then Yasoma put a question:

“Bridgie dear, the people up here have very wise notions of their own. Supposing one of them had done anything horrid long ago they wouldn't think he need worry about it.

They'd say, 'Go straight on and forget it and just behave better in future.' They think that under the wrong Me that does the wrong things there's the right Me waiting to get through, so it's better to give it a hand up than worry about what you've done. Is that what you think?"

"Well, it is and it isn't!" said Bridget, settling down comfortably to metaphysics. "You've got to be sorry, and sure when a cut heals 'tisn't as if you never had it. And there's very few bad things a person does but they drag someone else in, and then they've got to make good to him. And then there's confession, Miss Soma, not to a priest—for what's he?—but to the people that shouldn't think too well of us and—"

But Yasoma silenced her. That touched too near the root of pain.

"Everyone's got to judge himself," she said briefly. "And that's what I like here—they do let you judge for yourself."

“’Tisn’t everyone’s fit to judge themselves, and sooner or later they’ll have to pay for it,” said Bridget with equal brevity, and getting up shook the crumbs from her lap to the birds.

Ten minutes later Yasoma was walking up the hill with feet light as wings. What a 312 morning! The sky rained radiance into the cup of the earth until it brimmed with the wine of immortal youth. The little stream beside the track was rushing light, and every leaf flashed colors that “killed the diamond in its silver cell.” The blue air had the sky-quality of pure infinity.

“And this is joy!” she thought. “I never knew it before. The marvel! I shan’t be afraid—nor shy—nor anything of the things that women are and men expect them to be. At this minute if I saw him I could tell him what I feel, and it would be as natural as when a bird sings to its mate. They aren’t ashamed—why should I be? They tell you here to go to Nature and learn—I’ve gone. I’ve learned.”

And then she could think no longer. She could only feel, expect, hope. He would come down to meet her. She could swear to that. He could not stay away. If she had only had the courage to run out last night and catch his hand in the moonlight and look into his eyes, all would have been well now. Yet then—she would have missed these exquisite moments of hope so perfect that it was the soul of delight. This was best.

A step—and her heart fluttered like a bird's; her feet slackened. No—not his. A laborer passed her, his legs wrapped in coarse bandages against the mud of the rice-fields. Not knowing why, except that everyone must share her happiness, she stopped and held out all the money in her bag, smiling—a few yen, but to him a sum of magnitude. He took it with a broad grin and a bow and went on thinking the *seiyojin* (foreigner) mad as a March hare. She concentrated into a prayer that Sayoko would not come to meet her this one, one day, and it was answered. She did not come.

Nor did anyone else. But then there were a thousand ways of explaining that. Arima would want to see him. Perhaps Scott had come back. He would almost certainly go straight off to work in the field. 313
Why be unreasonable? He could not come to meet her however much he wished it. She went on still more quickly.

At the top of the hill Sayoko was coming down her garden ready for jujutsu.

“Come in and change!” she cried. “My honorable uncle is to see us again today. So we must do our best. I am so frightened that I can feel all my courage running out of my toes like cold water. You are frightened too?”

“Nothing can frighten me today, and, if you ask me why, I can’t tell you. Let’s hurry—hurry!”

The thought had struck her that Ito would come with Arima. That would be his first chance.

But when they entered the jujutsu hall hand in hand he was not there. Arima was waiting alone, cool and curt after his usual fashion.

“Do your best, both of you. Today we shall have six throws. Watch each other’s eyes. Do not keep your limbs at tension; above all do not make your body too hard. Yield to the enemy’s will but only as a pushed-down gourd in water springs instantly back to the surface. Let the mind be ruler of the body! Now!”

They saluted each other ceremoniously. It was easier for Sayoko to keep her composure and coolness, for Arima had been her first trainer and had often watched her game and in a few minutes after a little feinting she had got Yasoma by the loin-throw and with perfect dexterity saved her a heavy fall by getting her hands under her head. The onlooker nodded approval.

“A fine *koshinage!*” said Arima.

“I’ve been wool-gathering!” Yasoma thought

in a rush. “And she’s putting out all she knows today. I’ll fight as if he were here too. I’ll think he is. He will be proud when he hears!”

Cool and wary now she advanced to the attack. Singular! Sayoko did not stir. 314
She stood still with dropped lids almost as though she had received some hurt in her victory. It might have put Yasoma off her guard but for a quick look from Arima, and when Sayoko sprang into sudden energy she was ready. That throw was hers. And Arima nodded approval again.

“Good. But too rough. Not finished enough, and you were afraid and therefore rougher with her than should be except in danger. See—I shall throw you and you shall not be hurt. Remember they say the goddess Kwannon has a thousand arms and she can use them all at once because she is never moved and always imperturbable! Now I throw you—thus!”

He advanced in his ordinary kimono and,

though she did her utmost, in a moment she was flung over his shoulder, and he had turned and caught her as she fell. She never touched the ground. She flushed with pleasure as he set her on her feet.

“If I could do *that!*” she sighed.

“You can do that and more,” said Arima. “Remember my honorable niece is very good—but you are not far behind. You will be an honorary *shodan* before you know what you have gained.”

The lesson went on, and of the six falls Yasoma had scored three when they stood glowing before their teacher.

“Now you have learned enough to know there is much more to learn—and that is to have gone far,” said Arima. “Next, you shall be tested against chosen men, so that you shall not be thrown into fear by the thought that a man is attacking you. These are days when it is well for a woman to be able to protect herself.”

“But I have done that already,” said Yasoma proudly, and told him of her adventure in the far-away Abingdon fields.

“Good!” he said in his abrupt way.

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“But you may not always meet an oaf like that. We must teach you so that you shall not fail if you meet an expert. In all things that matter a trained woman is as good as a man, for physical strength is the poorest and clumsiest of weapons. I bid you good morning for I must return to my work. This afternoon I shall speak on judo. I invite your honorable company.”

It had ceased to seem strange to Yasoma that he should not choose a spiritual or religious subject though she had not yet gained the Zen point of view that there is no subject nor action that is not spiritual if you have the eyes to see. But it was very clear that the occasion would be unusual, and it seemed a part of the perfection of that happy morning that this should be his theme. Nothing—no work—would keep Ito away from it if even he had not another reason to bring him.

She and Sayoko left with many bows and thanks, and her joy was heightened by a little episode as they went down together to change for the field.

“I heard what my honorable uncle said yesterday,” said Sayoko, swinging along. “He said of you—‘She has caught the spirit of judo and does not yet realize it. She will be a fine judo-ka if she chooses.’”

Yasoma glowed. Always the idea was present to her that there was much more in jujutsu than met the outward understanding, and this though she loved it as an art. Here was an opening door indeed!

“And you?” she asked with friendly interest. Sayoko laughed.

“Honorable uncles do not praise unworthy nieces! I heard Arima sama say that I occasionally disgrace my training and bring him shame.”

They almost ran up to the field, so gay was

the morning, and it winged Yasoma's feet to know that the men were working in a field near by and she might see for herself— might catch a sound of his voice as he shouted to some far-away worker. 316

But no. She could not see him in the little blue-clad groups at work in the field. When a shout reached her it was not his. Strange questioning stirred in her mind—a prescient anxiety. She could not wait any longer—impossible! She must ask. It must be done carelessly, kicking a stone or two aside, yawning, perhaps, to begin with. She went through the little stage play elaborately, and then—

“I wonder when Scott sama is coming back. At this busy time it must throw much work on Ito sama. Perhaps that was why he did not come to see our judo today.”

Sayoko shook her head:

“Not that. Early this morning Ito went to the monastery to meet Scott sama. There is some

great thing to be done, and they consider it.
He walked.”

“And when does he come back?” It struck at the root of all her joy, for what might it not foretell? Some passionate revulsion, some unconquerable instinct for battle against human desire? She knew herself thwarted and turned a stricken face from the girl at her side. Sayoko went on carelessly:

“Who can tell? The abbot is a Truly Awakened One and has the great secret learning. My uncles go often. I wish I could see that place. They say the beauty is more lovely than elsewhere in Japan. Even than the Three Famous Places of Beauty. . . . Oh, these weeds! They have roots as long as my arm! You are beginning to speak Japanese very well, Soma sama. Tell me a story while we work.”

Yasoma tried lamely to wrestle with Japanese verbs of distinction that she might fill Sayoko’s mind with the task of correcting mistakes and showering praises, but for the

first time her soul tasted jealousy more poignant than that inspired by any rival —jealousy of a past of which she knew nothing, his future which he could never mean that she should share, and terror of the cruel Japanese coldness which might turn its edge to her any day. With a European one could be sure he would never be cruel to himself and for that reason would have some consideration for a woman whose misery might retaliate. But these people who never spared themselves, whose tremendous concentration won through to every goal. . . . For a while he lost personality in her fear and became one of a race hidden in their own secrecy from all the conjectures of the world. Eleanor had warned her. Her mind almost fainted before its own fears. But Sayoko chattered on like the laughing dance of a little mountain stream among its flowers, and at last it soothed Yasoma's sad heart as if it were as much a part of nature.

“You dear!” she said at last, sitting among her heaps of weeds for what Sayoko called “a breath-taking.” “Do you know how kind you

are to me? And I believe I've never even shaken hands with you, much less kissed you as I should an English girl."

The other drew back instantly, but smiling to disarm the motion.

"I think we do not like to be touched," she said. "It is not you, Soma sama, it is—something comes from a person you touch and sometimes it is disgusting—so it is better to touch no one, and then one is neither rude nor unhappy. What comes from you does not hurt. Still I think it is a good rule. In England and Japan I have seen girls dance with men—Well, I do not wish it."

"But women?" Yasoma suggested.

"Women too. To be touched is too intimate, and if I bear it from one I must from all. Forgive me."

She bowed with perfect courtesy and laughed—but from a distance. It gave a twinge to Yasoma. Kindest of the kind,

Sayoko, and yet always kept her distance. Could it be that she, like Ito, felt the cold air blowing between Asia and Europe to freeze their kindness?

“I think I have a headache today. The sun is hot,” she said in a moment.

“Then go back and rest. Or come to our house.”

It was difficult to keep up talk with Sayoko as they walked back to lunch hurriedly before the address of Arima. The men had not yet arrived when they went into the Meditation Hall and crept into their corner. Presently the rest trooped in headed by Arima in his rough kimono tucked up into the belt, exactly as he worked, but carrying a large iron fan. He had evidently laid down his spade and walked straight into the hall without a moment's delay. Disregarding the usual Japanese politeness he scarcely bowed as he took his place and began speaking in Japanese without any preface in his own terse and direct style. Through all her preoccupation it pierced,

holding her thoughts as though he spoke to her only. Her mind had not the strength to struggle against his invasion. With her as with others his personality far more than his words marched in and took possession, and the very passion that wounded her had stirred all her powers into keenest life. No manuscript was there to help her understanding, and she strained her strength to utmost tension to catch a word here and there as a clue to the rest. That was the best she could hope. The strong harsh voice dominated the hall.

“One of the masters of Zen once preached a sermon which began and ended thus: ‘In this school of Zen no words are needed. What then is the ultimate of Zen teaching?’” He spread his arms abroad and descended from the pulpit.

“Need I explain his meaning? This day I shall do what he would have been apt to condemn, but since I too have my meaning that will not halt me. I take as my text the question of a monk and his master’s reply. He

asked. 'How can I escape the bondage of birth and death?' The response was: 'Where are you?' Now, make what you can of that, and I shall tell you what I have made of it.

“Where are you? Why, certainly at the moment you are in a world in which you have to live until you understand that it is merely a dream from which you have waked. The wise all know this but also know that a dream has momentary truth and that if you want to relate yourself to the universe you had better begin where you stand.

“You may well ask how you can begin this quest in a world so wrongly reported by your own senses that they are forever leading you into false conclusions. The answer is indicated in the statement. By subduing your senses so that they are more obedient than those of the average man, and by training your rambling thoughts into calm which produces an emptiness in which the higher consciousness can function.

“There is an ancient story of a King of

Ceylon who beheld a vision. With unusual good sense he queried on its disappearance:

“‘Who was he that asked the question? What appeared before me? Was it dream or magic?’ And the knowledge came to him:

“‘Things are all creations of one’s own mind. When the mind goes world-spinning many things appear. When it does not it looks into the true state of affairs.’

“And as he thought thus voices were heard to say: ‘Well have you reflected, O King! You should act according to this view.’

“So should you who listen. You do
enough unconscious world-spinning to
lay it consciously aside sometimes and view
the universe impartially. Life should be
handled tentatively. As in the saying of
Christ: ‘This world is a bridge. Pass over it
but build no house upon it.’ At the same time
keep the bridge in good repair. This wisdom
will express itself in dealing with the body in
such a way as to make it an accomplice in the

true survey of the universe. I am for no starving or grubbing in filth and fatigue, and I cite the Founder of our faith as my witness. He says:

“Devotion to the pleasures of sense is a low practice, painful, unworthy, unprofitable, the way of the world. On the other hand devotion to self-mortification is painful, unworthy, unprofitable. By avoiding these extremes He who has won the Truth had gained knowledge of the Middle Way which gives knowledge, which causes Calm Insight, Enlightenment.’

“These are what we seek. Accordingly, when we are hungry we eat, but temperately and of the simplest foods. When we are tired we sleep, but sleep should be a gateway of experience. As to perpetual study of the scriptures and dwelling on them, that is for beginners, if for them. We need a basket to carry our fish home, and it must be in good repair; but when the fish are on the table the basket is done with. It is the practicality of Zen that it begins with the training of the

body and mind and then confidently waits the day of transcending both by the experience known as Enlightenment. Every educated man in Japan should know he need not dwell spiritually in the world which our senses have built on cloud foundations. And the best way to foil this game of the senses is to use their own weapon to beat them by training the body to help rather than hinder in the work of transcending its own limits.

“Now here in Japan, deriving through China, we have laid great stress on the 321 development of the body, especially in *jujutsu* which means the military arts. And not only of the body but of the mind and spirit. So far as I know we are the only people who have connected these military arts with the esoteric or occult side of our belief. Savages, we know, have had mystic ceremonies connected with war; I do not speak of this but of our steady esoteric discipline in connection with judo or jujutsu, *kenjutsu*, [fencing], *tessen* [use of the iron war-fan], *naginatat*, [lance exercise], and *kyujutsu* [archery]. Does this seem strange?

By no means. Every action a man performs is in truth spiritual, and the motive may exalt it to nobility or depress it to brutality. This is why, though war is a bloody brutal business for which those who are responsible will answer at their peril, the instinct of all true men exalts the soldier who offers his life as a free gift to his country and those who rightly or wrongly represent it. The character of the true warrior is of high spirituality if the motive is what we should expect.

“Now in all these arts of war the esoteric training is invaluable, because not only does it add esoteric power to the physical but it transports the whole thing to the spiritual plane. And this aspect of the war arts as taught by Zen has made the chivalry of Japan and has kept her almost entirely from military aggressions on other countries. I do not forget the invasion of Korea many centuries ago, but those who study its circumstances will see that it does not transgress the spiritual law.

“Of our position in Korea now and of later times I do not speak at length, but I say that

in our Buddhism lay our power of cohesion and attainment in the past and in that only lies the hope of preserving the austere and exalted virtues of our fathers and the true aristocracy of our country. Such men as we are know that the rule of the masses, however forced upon us, carries the seed of ruin for themselves, for the simple reason that inevitably the wise are few, the many are foolish and ignorant. Yet we may mitigate their follies and sentimentalities. For my own part I should have the chosen youth of our country taught the military arts, in their esoteric significance, women as well as men, for they destroy softness and self-indulgence. They discourage the money-getting spirit and they are the Way of Power, combined as they must be with the intellectual and spiritual exercise of contemplation and meditation. No person can be worthless who has passed through this training, and every nation has its true aristocracy which no democratic spirit can destroy. This is my reason for choosing this subject today. Be of these who have attained power and use it worthily!

“I do not use the foolish term ‘supernatural’ in the examples I am about to give. I tell you this way is open to you all if you choose to take it, and it is no more supernatural than digestion or procreation both of which present many aspects that would be called supernormal if they were not as normal as all power is to those who have studied and used it. What I deal with is only the extension of laws we know.

“Now I shall first speak of sword-play but with no graces or oratory. They are not needed, for in Japan that esoteric training has left us the perception of the mystery and beauty of the sword almost intact. To us the sword and what it symbolizes is a spiritual thing.

“Are you aware that every true swordsman in Japan in the days of this training could exercise a power which enabled him to become invisible to an assailant who, however skilful, was not esoterically trained? He left only his sword visible, flashing, pointing, dazzling the eyes of his foe,

multiplying into many sword-points coming from all quarters till he could not tell which was real, which visionary? Furthermore that such a swordsman could arrest his opponent's sword at any point he wished? As thus: the foe would raise his sword to strike the terrible two-handed downward blow; he could not move it; it would rest in air as though struck into a solid block of wood.

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“See this iron war fan in my hand. It may be called a weapon in itself. But that is nothing. Let us suppose a warrior who is surprised unarmed by his foe. A war fan, or let us as well say a paper fan, lies beside him. He snatches it up, breathes in power, and lo! the enemy sees a sword flashing in his hand—a sword multiplied, terrible, dazzling as sun rays flung back from a mirror. You do not believe this? You doubt? Then see!”

He stopped speaking and with every eye fixed on him flourished the war-fan in the air, uttering a wild cry—the battle shout. Instantly it was gone. A sword in his hand

displayed circles, side-thrusts, fore-thrusts, direct, above, below. He stamped, he lunged. One man started up from the ground and flung an arm out in breathless excitement. Yasoma watched, all else forgotten, her heart beating in her throat. It lasted perhaps two minutes. Then there was a loud rattle that shook the air like fear. The sword was gone. Arima closed the iron blades of the war-fan and flung it crashing down.

“*That* is what the world calls matter,” he said contemptuously. “But what the world calls matter is spirit, and the wise man, himself being spirit, can throw it into what forms he will. There is no secret to this. Try it and do it. Further, you can master the mind of your enemy by the same knowledge. You can turn his wrath into laughter and send him away, a good fellow well-pleased with himself and you and all the world.

“Now, you noticed I shouted? Why do you suppose the instinct of every man is to shout when he goes into battle of whatever sort it may be? It is the same with beasts. The

lion roars, the elephant trumpets. Do it when you want to let yourself go. Don't constrain yourself. Why? Because it is vibration—and vibration is one of the secrets of power and influence. But, of course, get knowledge first. The shout I uttered then was in the right vibration (to use a misleading term, for these things must be done, not chattered over). It shattered the pattern of (let us call them) the electrons and protons which represent the fan and changed them for those that the human senses recognize as a sword—but, with power, we can make it up into a new pattern as by shaking colored glass in a kaleidoscope you change the design. The truth is—and it was long ago perceived in legend—you can change any form (including your own) into any other by altering what to ignorant hearers I must call its pattern. The response is instant. Believe me the old tales even of the shape-changing of the werewolf and the ghost-fox have a substratum of truth though garnished to suit popular taste. Did you ever know power which was not a two-edged sword according to the hand that held it? Much that was formerly called fairy-tale

we call today psychic science, and its bounds will be indefinitely extended Naturally, the word 'pattern' has no meaning. I use it as a symbol.

“Just now I shook the pattern from the arrangement you recognize as a fan into that you see as a sword. In reality both are formless activity disguised as appearances, for appearances alone can be perceived by the physical eyes. Remember that in the latest and highest teachings of such men as rule the world of science today ‘the solid substance of things is illusion. It is a fancy projected by the mind into the external world. There is nothing to make any *one* of them (the worlds) into an actual world. Choose one and weave your fanciful images about it. That alone can make it actual.’

“Well, your senses working along their own pattern have built an imagined world about you, wreathed with your own images. For my part I think it is better to follow Zen and see the world as it is, for I can assure you it is much more interesting and

powerful in relation to yourselves than the pattern reported by your senses leads you to suppose.

“When the third eye of wisdom is opened you behold neither fan nor sword but *power* which you can mold into a shape perceptible to the uninstructed or deal with yourself as power which has neither part nor substance. Need I speak of the fakes and charlatans who counterfeit these things? or of those who use them for evil? No, for your training here arms you at all these points. Here, the aim of your study is to open the Eye of Wisdom represented on the brows of the gods in many lands as a symbol.

“And the shout? That also is power vibrating until it stirs the response in power. Were the window in this room glass I could shatter it with a cry. I have heard a man shout, and the birds dropped dead from a tree before him. I have heard him shout again, and they rose and flew away. For all forms of life and what we call death are power and interchangeable.

“Will any of you trust me so far now and here that I may break what we call life in you and then restore you to it? You who study the great art of jujutsu know it is often done by strangling in the judo schools, and the men are restored by a method called *kwappo*. This is done to strengthen the nerves and teach a useful mode of resuscitation—which however is not entrusted to students below the rank of *shodan*. It is resuscitation by direct contact, and several of you have seen it and know that a man comes round unharmed. But now I will show you the other and occult way, that which is really as natural as the first, that you may know the power of the *kiai*—the shout I have used once already. This time it will be different. Who will volunteer? And remember that just as hypnotism or certain drugs free the consciousness from the control of reason, so also does this.”

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Every man rose. Yasoma watched enthralled. Ito had passed out of her mind with every other earthly thought. If she could have analyzed it she would have said she was vision and no more. She wished with longing

that she had offered herself.

Arima beckoned the farthest man at haphazard, and even as he moved forward uttered a terrible wild cry that rang through the hall with shattering force, thrilling every nerve to terror. The man dropped as if shot and so lay motionless.

“Look!” said Arima. “Feel his heart. It has stopped. See his face, congested with blood. The tongue protrudes. Lay him aside. He does not suffer at all. But he is what the world calls dead. No matter. Let us go on.”

The strangeness of the remainder of that address with the motionless form stretched out before them Yasoma thought could never be forgotten while life lasted. Yet in a moment more she had forgotten the awful witness in the passionate interest of Arima’s words.

“What is death? Ah—a difficult question for those who are not wise! The stoppage of the bodily processes certainly. Their

disintegration with the cells and fibers if enough time elapses. We shall not allow that to elapse here, for an hour is precious in the pilgrimage we call life and we must not rob our brother. But, as to death, in the higher consciousness we know its secret and we are content. Were I a Master skilled—let us say, as the Buddha of Nazareth—that body of Kawagita’s might have begun to rot and I could have restored it as he did. The agency I shall use to restore him needs no direct contact. Again it will be *kiai*—‘the spirit-meeting shout,’ as we call it, but used somewhat differently from the death-dealing one. Now, this method can be taught to none nor can any use it until he has attained *satori*—which means that the Eye of Wisdom must have opened in him—which again means that he must have attained the more expanded form of consciousness that knows the universe as it is, not as it appears. The teaching of a competent master is also needed. Now, what is the power of this shout, and from what does it proceed?

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“I have told you—power calling on power. In

India whence the Far East originally derived this wisdom this one universal power has the name of *akasha*. It is the force of which what are called electricity, time, and so forth are parts—side-shows. A big thing! Here in Japan we call it *aiki*. You will notice that that word is *kiai* reversed. The discipline it requires, which also hails from India through China, strengthens the abdominal muscles exactly as does the deep breathing of India which is used by their yins and by our highest jujutsu experts. Jujutsu is a magnificent discipline, thus used, both for the mind and body, and I add that reading the *Nō* plays aloud in the historic chant is also a magnificent means of health for the lungs and the abdominal muscles, while at the same time it expands the mind by the power of the truth and beauty of Art which being (in its *yugen*) beyond all reason is a part also of the One Power of which the universe is a conscious manifestation.

“Thus we practice it here. Need I say how practice of physical discipline combined with our nationally simple way of living

strengthened our army for the terrible Manchurian marches in the war with Russia and gave unequalled endurance and recuperative power when wounded?

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We are now using more Western methods. Will they be as good?

“Now, if you would excel in jujutsu and in much more than jujutsu learn to use every means to strengthen the abdominal muscles. Use the deep breathing in which Ito sama will instruct you and adopt his method of folding a cloth about the abdomen below the ribs and breathing against its strain. But of practical means he will speak another time.

“After this, need I tell you that *aiki* the force of the universe is the secret of high jujutsu, and that, especially because sword-work and archery are unfortunately dying, it is an excellent thing on which to concentrate, concentration being the road to *aiki*, and *aiki* the illimitable universal power which a man must tap to make himself the master of life instead of its slave. At all hours, at all moments keep your minds fixed on strength,

and use every means to produce it. When after long and patient study you have gained the mastery over *aiki* you are a free man indeed. For you, the dark is no dark, because you depend for sight on other than your eyes. For you, fire does not burn nor water engulf. It is a divine clairvoyance. But . . . [he gave further illustrations and went on] the foundation is to learn to control your mind and body. Humble but necessary! Learn this.

“You will find the *kiai* helpful in many ways small and great. When as a student I was troubled with severe bleedings of the nose my master laughed and told me it was easily curable. How? He fixed his eyes on me, and I felt something dart from them that first subjugated and then raised power to meet it. The blood was throbbing from my nostrils. He uttered the *kiai* shout and I felt as though a thrill of cold water—ice cold, touched the tip of my nose and ran up to my forehead where it settled. The blood-flow stopped. I was cured.

“Learn these things. I would not have

you monks, of whom there are plenty, but men, of whom there are few. It may be well for some to sit all day lost in meditation, but it is better to live your life in the world that needs you as men skilled in the manly arts which outside indeed appear as physical power but inside are spiritual. Take all the gifts of the universe. Work. Be never idle, and train your bodies according to the teachings of Ito sama, who knows what he professes. Keep your body full of *ki* by healthy hard feeding, work and exercise. And tell me of visions when you have done this, but not before. Keep your concentration one and indivisible; and your mind will then be ready to dart or pounce with all its force and with no hesitation wherever you choose to use it; remember always that this power will aid you surely beyond death as in other mental states. We cannot dwell upon this too much. I now conclude with a few general remarks.

“Our object here is to send men out into the world who have received Enlightenment. Why trust men as spiritual and philosophical

guides who are devoid of this knowledge? For the life of me I cannot understand why we should. It is not as if the knowledge is unattainable. It is for the taking. I do not say that every man has reached the stage of evolution where he is competent to receive it. But I do say that a man who is not competent to receive it is certainly on a plane of psychic evolution which absolutely unfits him for being the guide and ruler of others. That indeed is a case of the blind leading the blind, and what right have we for surprise at the misfortunes of a world so managed?

“There is another point. I am occasionally told that this dwelling on jujutsu and the military arts encourages brutality. I think this nonsense of a pernicious type. Our traditional effort is to associate these things with the highest form of the psychic wisdom handed down to us. This has not been the case in Europe, and though I am not here to criticize I think European military spirit has lost by the dissociation, and I could give my reasons. Furthermore this is a world in which the weak for some considerable time

will need defense individually and collectively. And, to conclude, I have almost invariably observed that the critic of this so-called brutality is a person so terrified of pain for himself as to be a warm defender of the devilish brutalities of vivisection practiced upon those who are too weak to protect themselves from outrage and who have trusted the hands which murder them in unspeakable circumstances. Science is daily justifying the right of these fellow creatures to immunity from torture.

“But even were this not so it could never be our spirit here. We are prepared to suffer and inflict pain only when the end justifies the means, and the man who is trained here will be a just judge of the occasion. Can as much be said for the average man outside? There, undisciplined strength is rampant. Here, we strengthen strength and add the discipline that makes it wisdom.

“Therefore study all the great arts of *jujutsu* (military arts), and I wish it were incumbent on every young man in the empire so to study

if study were combined with the discipline that sharpens the sword of the intellect and spirit. Then indeed do we produce the superman of whom Europe has dreamed!

“It occurs to me that for those who have not heard them I may do well to give the rules which are considered to hold the secret of *kiai*. Those who are acquainted with the Indian spirit in Yoga will do well to compare the two.

‘I have no parents; I make the heaven and the earth my parents.

I have no divine power; I make honesty my power.

I have no means; I make docility my means.

I have no magic power; I make inward strength my magic.

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I have neither life nor death; I make AUM my life and death.

I have no body; I make stoicism my body.

I have no eyes; I make the flash of lightning my eyes.

I have no ears; I make sensibility my ears.

I have no limbs; I make promptitude my
limbs.
I have no design; I make opportunity my
design.
I have no miracles; I make the righteous
Law my miracle.
I have no principles; I make adaptability to
all things my principles.
I have no friends; I make my mind my
friend.
I have no enemy; I make incautiousness
my enemy.
I have no armor; I make good will and
righteousness my armor.
I have no castle; I make immovable mind
my castle.
I have no sword; I make the subconscious
my sword.'

These words will bear consideration. I
conclude with an adage which may be useful.
Personality of form, whether it be yours or
that of my war-fan, has no real existence. It
can be distributed or changed with a wish."

He ended abruptly as he had begun, and said:

“And now Kawagita has drunk his draft of Lethe. Let us recall him.”

He flung his hand up and shouted. Cold tremors ran along Yasoma’s veins as though the cry called up response in her own body. She felt its energy lock the muscles of her arms and feet so that she could not have stirred if she would. Suddenly it relaxed. It was gone, and as it ended Kawagita stirred as if from sleep. A man sprang forward and raised him, and he sat blinking at them and rubbing the sleep out of his eyes.

“A good dream!” he said dully. “And now air—air! My lungs are empty.”

They led him out and set him under a tree, and presently he was talking and smiling.

“A heavy fall—I tripped. But I’m all right now, if I have a cup of the honorable tea. But I knew something I shall remember later.”

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A delicate rain was falling, and all were

exulting in the riches it would bring their little rock-hemmed fields. Arima had gone down to the river where he stood looking at the running water as though solving some problem in relation to future uses of its smooth unhurrying speed. With a sudden impulse prompting her to courage she ran down quickly to him and bowed as he turned to fix her with piercing eyes.

“Arima sama, was what you said for women as well as men?”

“Certainly. How otherwise? Remember the adage ‘Personality is but a mask.’ You are human under your skin and much more. What then?”

She looked up into his face fearlessly.

“Arima sama, I had no manuscript of what you said. Yet I understood. Is this madness or a true thing?”

Still regarding her steadily he said:

“It is a true thing. Apply what I said about form and power. The power behind all languages is one. The form is nothing. If a fan can be a sword, Japanese is English or anything else in its essence. There is nothing to be proud of either in my sending or your taking. On entering the hall I thought you could not receive it. Why?”

It seemed that the answer was dragged from her against her will—or rather that another answered for her.

“Because my thoughts were so full of another that there was no room for anything else. Afterwards you swept me away.”

Looking at her fixedly he said:

“Should not this prove to you that it is better not to remember yourself any more? And why? Because the self you had forgotten has no real existence. It is a label with nothing attached to it. Love is self-forgetfulness and concentration and a mighty magic in hands that are instructed—ruin in

those that are not. Walk with care, for you walk on the confines of power. Let your meditation be clean of any thought of self.”

He turned away then called her back:

“The Buddhist Scriptures are probably unknown to you. I wish you to hear what Gautama Buddha, who was gravely conscious of the value of the spoken word, said of these supernatural powers. Kindly attend!”

She stood, fixed in intent interest, while he repeated these words:

“I, brethren, when I so desire, passing beyond consciousness of form in every way by destruction of the impacts of sense enter upon and abide in the sphere of boundless space.

“Passing wholly beyond the sphere of boundless space I enter upon the sphere of boundless consciousness. Passing beyond the sphere of boundless consciousness I enter upon and abide in the sphere of

nothingness.

“Passing beyond the sphere of nothingness I enter upon the sphere where there is neither perception nor non-perception.

“Passing wholly beyond the sphere where there is neither perception nor non-perception, I enter upon the sphere of cessation of consciousness and sensation.

“I enjoy the possession in various ways of magic powers. From being one I become multiform, from being multiform I become one. Appearing and disappearing I pass without let or hindrance through a wall, a rampart or mountain as if through air. I plunge through solid ground as through water. I walk on water without dividing it. I make the air my couch like a 334 winged bird. With my hand I touch this sun and moon, mystic beings though they be.

“When I so desire with a divine faculty of

hearing, clarified and surpassing that of man, I can hear sounds divine and human far away.

“‘And Kassapa, brethren, when he so desires has a divine faculty also.’”

“Kassapa also,” said Arima. “Therefore also you and I. Go and consider this.”

Chapter Twenty

Days passed and there was no sign of Ito's return, and longing was numbed in Yasoma by the growing certainty that either he or Arima had decreed that they should meet no more. It must have been no light thing which had taken him away. She, who knew all the routine of his work, knew that well. There was no point of life there untouched by him, for under Arima's strange aloof guidance Ito guided all. When Scott left he took up the English for the newcomers who were not fluent. Nothing lapsed, for he lifted it. And every day when she went up to carry on her own routine of jujutsu and field work she saw the emptiness and hurried down again to the temple to bury herself in her own thoughts.

She had done her utmost to follow the line of meditation and concentration Arima had suggested, but it was useless. Pain was too urgent. How could she tear her thoughts from the one beloved and fix them on any abstract wisdom? Impossible. She passed the empty hours with listless hands laid upon her knees, sitting on a mossy stone under a great gnarled tree in a little grove not far from where Bridget sat with her work. There she could be unseen in the whispering shade and though in some sort the external peace comforted her a little there was no peace in the tossing unrest of her heart.

The very beauty of the woods and mountain had become a prison instead of a paradise of limitless lovely spaces. How true—how true the teaching that beauty and joy are nothing real in themselves but only the result of man's consciousness projected on a shadow-screen, where shadows play their pitiful human drama and vanish when the dry light of reason plays on them!

She had moments when the whole thing

appeared almost grotesquely meaningless. In London Ito had been nothing to her but an irritation which she endured only for the pleasure of trying to humiliate and anger him when they met. The news of his death would not have moved her to a regret. Now, his absence desolated all beauty. Yet he was the same man—But was he? And she the same woman—but, no, her heart denied that in wrath. She was not the same woman. The spring of every thought was changed.

Sometimes it seemed that in real truth this love of hers was an acute nervous disease, physically destructive, which might flare out in some wild crisis of passion and leave her dust and ashes for the rest of her life.

Sometimes she brooded on the thought that what she loved had no true existence—that he who centered all her world was only an ideal figure built up out of her own scraps of reading and imagination and with no relation to real life.

But even if he were no more than that, how destroy what she had created with joy and

grief unspeakable out of the very fiber of her heart? She knew enough of Buddhist philosophy to know that imagination has a reality to which no so-called fact can pretend, and this is the reason why ideas and not deeds sway history and make the man of true imagination the ruler of man. What king has had an empire like Shakespeare's? What civilization is not based on dream?

“We are the music-makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers
And sitting by desolate streams.
With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities.
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory.”

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Are not the very characters in books—the creations of great imaginations—more real than the struggling millions who die and enter oblivion? And what dream does not die sooner or later when transmuted into so-called fact? It is dragged from its own world, and planted, an alien, in the world of

appearances; and there it must surrender its very nature or die. She thought that this would be the story of her love for Ito. She had shaped him in the forge of her imagination, beautiful and wise and strong, and having done this her selfish passion had dragged him into the world where attainment of desire is loss, and time and distance have power to divide, and life to conquer the eternal, even if only for a while.

She had moments of strangest realization of new things while the night marched by in all the glory of stars and veiled or unveiled moons. She would sit up then with her arms about her knees and lose herself—first in memory, then in close realization of his care for her, his wisdom and hidden beauty of spirit—until the thought was so actual and he drawn so near that it seemed the night must break apart and disclose him in a timeless vision of joy.

If any master had told her that in truth she was fulfilling Arima's directions for the practice of meditation and concentration, and

training her very soul into the self-oblivion which is the essence of spiritual life, how could she have believed it? And yet nothing could be truer. She would have answered:

“That cannot be true, I am thinking 338
only of the one thing in the universe
which is more truly me than I am myself, and
in those depths I am lost. They sweep me
wholly away from myself and make me his
and him mine. How can I help thinking of
what is the life of my life?”

Certainly Arima would have replied:

“You sit lost in meditation and concentration on Love—the insoluble mystery, the force that generates force throughout the universe. That self-oblivion of which you speak is the upward thrust of all the despairing, striving ages. It concerns the universal consciousness as well as your own. You are driven on a cosmic emotion by Love, that Lord, terrible and beautiful, who masks his face with Death because man cannot endure the beauty of his hidden eyes. And through his grace, and

never before, you have become one with the Consciousness which is Alone in the universe.”

And if he had asserted that unknown to herself she was developing vast stores of vital energy to be swept along the path of mortal creative power in actual childbirth or in the travail of world-moving ideas as the radiance of the fire burning within her, again she would have listened with amazement but not in utter disbelief, because she knew every day more clearly that she was living with a stranger—a self in herself whom she had never known, the owner of incalculable strange powers. A new world—a new inhabitant in it; radiant dawns that disturbed her with beauty, striking like a sword at the heart; low glories of silent moonlight wringing her with longing; rains that wept the tears of all the world. Even the earth and sky and sea had remade themselves, because for the first time she knew Love and followed him with bleeding feet down his Stations of the Cross which unbar the gate of Resurrection.

But all birth is pain—more painful by far than death; and weariness darkened the light in her eyes to shadow as she realized that in the higher forms of love it is not pleasure that is brought to birth but a passionate kind of asceticism which makes denial into a purer joy than any fulfilment. A visitant from another world of thought, winged and shod with fire, surrounded with mystery, Love brought revelation not of things unknown and alien but of things forgotten, unalien, which had once been a part of buried life and stirred faintly in her now, promising some unimagined spring of blossom and summer of ripened fruit.

But these contradictions strained her body and mind almost unendurably. And the loneliness! Never a word of help—a touch of sympathy . . .

One morning at dawn as she stood after an almost sleepless night under the dewy trees, a young Japanese, whose faithful service followed Arima like a dog, came up the drive, carrying a long narrow box and a book

covered with a little white silk square with sprays of bamboo. He handed a note to her with a series of beautiful bows, smiling with pleasure to think of the pleasure he had brought with him. She opened the note and read eagerly:

“You have on your wall a picture. It has hung there so long that when you look at it you forget its beauty. I have read that the consciousness of man is like a dark sleeping town lit up here and there by the lanterns of night-guards moving slowly about, each lighting up a little circle around himself in the deep darkness. Let this picture which I lend you light up such a circle for you. Take down the picture to which you are too accustomed and replace it with this. It is a heart-medicine. Also I lend a book which is a manifestation of beauty. And since your skill in jujutsu may now rank you as *nidan*—our second grade—I request you to exercise your mental skill on *kiaijutsu*, for the body is the bridge over which the mind passes to victory. And I end this letter with words from the Edict of our great Emperor Meiji which all

should obey: 'Seek knowledge widely from the world.' This is a first precept and it is followed by that of our present Ruler, equally vital to psychic life:

“Refrain from variety and imitation and strive for solid character and originality.’ A great saying, since he himself follows his precept and realizes the Unity in the manifold, thereby bringing much power to his people.” This note was signed with Arima’s name and under it was written two words:

“Be happy.”

The instant sun shot a ray of pride and joy into her heart. The seal of true praise set upon her work. That was the crown of wild olive given at the Olympic Games. Now she was entitled to practice and use in case of need the dangerous locks known as *gyaku* with which only the initiated may be trusted. Now she would share the endurance tests for heat and cold, the summer practice known as *shochugako* and the winter *kangeko*. Much would be expected, and failure would be a

kind of public disgrace.

She found herself saying aloud: “Thank heaven they began me at it when I was twelve! The only decent thing they ever did for me!” And such a sense of victory rang through her that the delicious trill of the *uguisu* in the tree above was the exultation of her own heart.

And Ito must have agreed. He must, or Arima would never have written it. But that was only the beginning. The last words meant more—far more. *Kiaijutsu*? “The art of spirit-swaying.” That meant that she was worthy to enter upon the esoteric side of judō—341 to learn things which only the noble and self-controlled can learn, which must be refused to princes unless in the nature of things they prove themselves worthy. And even then no master can promise success. It must depend upon certain qualities in the pupil which may be absent when testing time comes. And she was chosen.

It was as if a great bright wind had blown

through her inmost being, saturated with sunshine and the smell of league-long pine-forests dripping morning dew in glory. Heart-medicine indeed! To be, to do, to realize life instead of brooding in its shadows! How could it seem otherwise than that Arima had sent something of the granite quality of his own strength in these gifts? For gifts they were and of the most precious. He had known her need! That sentence of the great Emperor's touched the very innermost of her weakness—"Refrain from variety and imitation . . ." What had she ever done but shrink from the icy baptism of truth until love set her upon imitating Ito, and for what? . . . Not for the truth's sake, but that she might be dear and desirable in his eyes. "Strive for solid character and originality." If the wisdom of the world had concentrated on her needs, thus and no otherwise must the oracle have spoken.

The true kindness hidden under the brief phrases touched her to the quick and gave her the happiness it prescribed. "Out of the strong came forth sweetness." She could not

measure his knowledge of her soul-sickness,
but if it had all been laid before him he would
have dealt with it exactly in this way,
shocking all her forces alive with a keen
magnetic ray of truth.

With joyful hands she unrolled the picture—a
long kakemono on creamy silk browned with
age, the setting a deep blue brocade of worn
richness. But the picture! The terrible smooth
gliding plunge of a great waterfall over 342
a height of mountain unseen,
concentrated into a force no earthly strength
could stay. Tortured water broken into agony
of foam and wild escape among the rocks
beneath. And across the plunge, caught and
tossed in the wind of its going, but unbroken,
yielding and rising again, the delicate bough
of an unseen maple tree, at home in the
hurricane of speed, secure in pliable
weakness, dancing as it were in the arms of
death and setting the stars of its leaves upon a
background of horror. It was as though the
universe had shouted aloud, “My strength is
made perfect in weakness”—and with the
eyes to read and the heart to understand

Yasoma knew why Arima had sent her this picture of the esoteric side of jujutsu, and sat enchanted above it.

Lastly she opened the book—a translation of some of the better known *Nō* plays done by master hands, collected into one volume. Some were known to her, some unknown. On the fly-leaf was written a brief poem in English translation which Ito had once quoted as they sat together in Indian moonlight on the Indian Ocean.

“Now I have known
That reality is itself unreal,
Ah, how shall I allow
That dreams are dreams?”

She fell into a muse over that, remembering how he had said in answer to her protest against the briefness of Japanese thought in their poems:

“But have you not seen that the Englishman is right who suggests that each of our poems is but the title of a poem? Yes—and I add that

the poem of which it is the title will spring from the creative embrace of the writer and the reader, and be enduring in their hearts.”

She might have sat there for hours with winged hope and joy beside her if Bridget had not come out with the morning sun on her gray hair to spread the morning meal under the trees. Indeed she was not one to shoo away any gracious influences, and as she set down her tray Yasoma unrolled the picture before her in dappled light and shade. She surveyed it for a minute in silence.

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“My, now! Isn’t it lovely? Though I wouldn’t like the way they drew the water in them straight lines and I didn’t see water that’d be gray like that except in the deep ocean. But, for all, isn’t it grand? Look at that little twig of a thing that’d be ripped away if it fought the water and it as happy as a grig and able to laugh at me big roaring boaster because it has no pride in it but only the sense of six instead!”

As usual—Bridget arriving at the heart of

things through every difference or race and time! Yasoma said as much, but Bridget waved off approval.

“And why wouldn’t I know what it means, Miss Soma? Sure there’s nothing like the Valley of Humility where our Lord Himself has His Country-House, and that little twig is a bit of the tree that covers it:

“‘He that is down need fear no fall,
He that is low, no pride.
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his guide.’

Now these people here—they’ll hide up their meaning and have it as close as a hen sitting on her egg, but when you give a wink to show you got it they’ll be as pleased as Punch. But get on with your breakfast, child. ’Tis getting late.”

Yasoma marched to triumphant music all the way up the hill and into and through Arima’s garden. He was pegging lines for the construction of the big hut where the

carpentering work would be done, and was entirely engrossed. None the less she did what she had never done before, walked up to him and spoke fearlessly and joyfully.

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“Arima sama, I want to thank you.”

He lifted himself and stood with one hand on his hip staring at her, at first absently but presently with attention to the radiance that surrounded her almost as visibly as it does a heavenly manifestation. Indeed to him it was rayed gold.

“But what has happened?” he asked, trying to reserve his sternness but melting visibly into human pleasure.

“What you have told me about my jujutsu. I never dreamed—I never thought! And when may I begin? Today?”

“Today certainly, if you desire. But why am I thanked for an act of justice? This should not be.”

“If it was mere justice I am the more glad. But to lend me the picture and the book was not justice but a gift of beauty—and what is more merciful than to give beauty? It is alms from heaven.”

His black deep-set eyes lit up with little sparks of interest.

“Indeed! Then if my mercy was not misplaced you should be able to tell me what the picture means, and without any sentiment about heaven—which we do not consider here.”

He was watching for failure—even Arima was not exempt from dislike of the crudity and equally disagreeable obtuseness of the foreigner; and though she could as yet be reproached with neither he was prepared to pounce like a hawk on opportunity.

She did not hesitate:

“It may have other meanings, but I took it for the spirit of judō, conquering by yielding, and

I took its lesson to heart.”

“Now that is sheer nonsense!” he said almost angrily. “Why turn everything into sentiment and symbol? It is the bough of a tree which just escapes touching the water and so evades the force of the plunge. Why do you want more than that of it? If you understand it rightly for what it is you will understand the universe. Let its reality be enough.”

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She answered at once and impetuously:

“Its reality is what I see.”

“Then keep it to yourself or you will hear no more. If you really understood it, you could not tell it. Well—come up to me this evening at six, and I shall show you the first of the secret locks. Do not bring Sayoko. She must not know them yet. Arimoto sama will be present. Now—to work!”

She tried to say a few words more but he silenced her.

“What said the wise man of China? ‘The universe is beautiful, yet it says nothing. The four seasons follow their law, but are not heard. Hence the saying that the perfect man performs nothing but gazing at the universe.’ Decipher that for yourself, and leave me to my measurements.”

She had turned away, but he recalled her to add, after his fashion, a few words which sounded irrelevant but bore much consideration. “Yes—listen! The universal force, which is one, is really composed of positive and negative electricity and the unnamable Something behind it which the West is trying to grasp. Should they not be humble in reflecting that thousands of years ago the wise men of China taught that it was the Yin and the Yang, the positive and negative principles, the masculine and the feminine principles, which are one and, being one, drive the universe? And this is Law—and Love. You have meditated on love. Has it cleared your eyes? No, do not answer me. Meditate upon it.”

She turned away, gladdened by the light in his eyes indicating some unworded meaning with a seed of comfort. Unintelligible, but she deciphered a spiritual and world-wide significance of this fierce storm of love which had blotted out the blue of her sky. . . . The Golden Dragon, the sun, still leaped behind the clouds with promise that if the good is taken away it is only that the infinitely better may take its place. For the first time it was possible to believe that if Arima had sent Ito away it was because he foresaw some far-off event justifying a present grief in the name of eternal bliss.

As she went up to the field with Sayoko she told her of her promotion and felt a fresh ray of sunshine in the girl's generous delight.

“The very mountains are proud today for what you have done, Soma sama! See how they flow into the blue of the sky and look higher than ever before! What would I give to have deserved that praise!”

“You deserved it as much as I. Perhaps more.

Even now I scarcely understand it,” said Yasoma.

“No, for then I should have had it. I did think my jujutsu was very near yours, but it is not. And to think that you will today know what I must not know yet. Tomorrow be hard with me. Put out your utmost skill that I may be conquered and learn. But surely we are all honored in your victory.”

Her selfless pleasure was fresh and clear as running water. How should it be possible to find sadness even in thwarting, in an atmosphere where joy was shared like bread and the success of one was the victory of all?

Coming up at six o'clock she found only Arima and Arimoto in the jujutsu room, both ready for the fray. She had never spoken with Arimoto before though in passing the keen darkness of his face had struck upon her like lightning. She felt that for some reason even apart from his skill he had been chosen for this work. He bowed with what appeared cold civility, breaking off a talk

with Arima of which she had caught only the last sentence:

“My grandfather was of the opinion which I submit to your honorable consideration that a man who has reached the grade of *nidan* without having experienced at least one of the *kubi-gatame* [neck locks] would suffer more in experiencing it than one who had been put through it earlier.”

“Your grandfather had a right to express his opinion. His name survives!” said Arima. “The difference has been made because the pupil is a woman, but where there is to be real progress all distinctions drop.”

He turned to Yasoma, slim, erect, and fully as tall as Arimoto in her *keiko-gi*, or wrestling kit.

“You have heard? From this onward we take you as a man as far as you wish to go, and within that limit spare you nothing. It is now understood that you pledge your honor to reveal none of the locks shown you

thenceforward except with the agreement of two experts of at least two grades higher than yourself. Is this fully understood? You realize the danger?”

She answered, “Fully,” without any misgiving, and added: “I give my solemn promise. I realize the danger. But I have something to ask. I heard what Arimoto sama said and I ask that I may undergo the trial of strangling, which I am told is considered right for the expert to have undergone. I am no expert yet, but I am determined to be one that all shall respect.”

If there were a little pride in her voice Arima could forgive it for the sake of her shining courage and expectance. He smiled.

“Well and good. Will you have it at my hands or those of Arimoto sama?”

“That I do not decide. It is for your decision.”

He smiled again, saying “Breathe out; empty your lungs,” and motioned to

Arimoto. The last thing she remembered was a clutch upon the loose collar of her shirt and a cruel tightening of the grip of death. Thought and memory ceased to be. Time was no more.

Darkness. She stood on the mighty arch of the bridge in the garden of Arima with the cold and desolate river pouring downward to ruin beneath. The desolation of the mountains overhung it with deepening shadow. Night was approaching but with no rising moon, no radiance of stars to pierce the gloom. Yet she knew no fear. It was as though her body had dissolved into pure spirit. No breath expanded her lungs, her feet moved as though the air supported them, and some force other than will moved them. Without one backward look, with no misgiving, she crossed the bridge and went forward through the well-remembered rocks, humped and crowding to block the way. No voice spoke in her ears, but some inner voice of consciousness instructed her that beyond and above a meeting awaited her.

“The One who Waits.” . . . Where had she read those words? She could not tell but knew with certainty that the meeting is one of joy or terror according to the consciousness of the traveler who comes to the place which all his life has been assigned to him. And even with that knowledge no fear vexed her.

Now, going upward, it seemed that a murmuring voice went with her like the breathing of wind among leaves. . . . The river? No—that roared upon its ruinous way, self-centered and reckless. Was it the soul of the pines, that clung to the path so long as they could breathe the rarefied atmosphere? Her consciousness was stripped so naked of earthly covering that it flowed into all life and became a conscious part of it.

“Have courage. The dark has no terrors. It is the bosom in which Light reposes. Go upward.”

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The wind-borne murmur came and went like the sound of a forest thinking aloud in the night. Now the darkness became translucent

though there was no moon. The consciousness behind her eyes gave light through them that made the path visible, and still it climbed and she with it in lonely delight. Now there stood before her a rock which Nature's own sculpture of wind and weather had carved into a rough seat. Before it the track widened as though to invite pause and a downward look through two towering rocks upon the angry river far below. A man was seated on the rock gazing down stedfastly, his hand propping his chin, and instantly she knew. He turned his face upon her. It was Ito.

It is said that there is one hidden valley in the mighty Himalaya in the far, far north where, when the Great God smiles, summer with a flash leaps to life and winter is dead. That was the miracle wrought in Yasoma, and it transfigured the world.

With a cry that shattered the ice in her heart she sprang to him, clinging to the hands stretched out to meet hers. Above her was the darkness of his face divinely near and tender,

his eyes absorbing hers in a smile to which sunshine is twilight. In the supreme union of the soul is the abyss of light; the *byss* has no meaning and therefore no existence. All is merged in radiance. Their souls were a single melody—"I am yours"—and the response—"Forever."

Again: "You know me as I am, stained and chained. Yet you love me?"

"I love what is mine and me—and more. There are neither stains nor chains in the state where we are one. Separation is the soil in which grows the Mystic Rose. Look up and about you, Beloved, for Beauty goes unveiled in the mountains."

Leaning upon his shoulder, encircled by his arm she looked down upon the blue calm of the river flowing serenely beneath to cleanse the earth with the lustration of the snows. White clouds were reflected on its surface, white wings glittered in flight above it. The air was changelessly still, webbed through with morning gold of

dawn. It slipped in shining drops from the pine needles, and through the blossoming rocks half hidden in ferns fell living threads of crystal—the little springs of the heights stealing downward to unite their streams to that of the great river of hope flowing towards the ocean of bliss. There was no desire in her heart for any closer union of the body—not even in the closeness of a kiss, for desire dies in the joy of perfect oneness. How should any desire himself? And in that union where each is both what further attainment is possible?

At last, brimmed with content, she looked up into his eyes. Speech was impossible. Never again would division be possible.

“Here in my heart’s heart I carry you ever one with myself.”

“And I. And I.”

Consciousness passed into ecstasy, and through it into realization beyond all shaping, within the inmost paradise of being. Life had

touched completion and knew itself at one with eternity.

Now a sea of shadows rose slowly about him, covering the clasped hands, hiding his face, darkening her eyes. Slowly shaping itself in the eclipse, the shadow of the temporal world crept over them like that of a great mountain. Slowly the hands fell apart.

Darkness. Quiet. Voices speaking softly through it. She closed her eyes or in truth opened them dimly, reluctantly, upon the temporal world once more, and saw—at first with bewilderment, afterwards with certainty, Arima kneeling beside her and 351 standing above him Arimoto looking silently down upon her. And this appeared to be the dream, the other the reality. So she lay, collecting her thoughts, conscious of neither pain nor weariness. Presently holding by Arima's hand she sat up and smiled.

“Well?” he said slowly. “You have tasted of death, and it is the inmost secret of judō to know that it is more life. What have you to

say?”

“I cannot say. I know,” she answered.

“That is best. Now drink this water and rest until I give Arimoto the signal, and you shall see the first two of the secret locks and next time you yourself shall try them.”

With unspeakable joy and quiet she rested while Arima and Arimoto talked softly together. Then, with a swift signal from Arima, both sprang to attention and after bowing to each other opened before her the first of the mysteries of dangerous skill reserved for the chosen.

Later Arima took her down himself to the temple, neither glad nor wearied but lost in a content for which earth has no name.

Chapter Twenty-one

Next morning she went as usual to her work, not outwardly changed unless unknown to herself some hidden beams poured through the chinks of mortality. It might be so, for to her great surprise and pleasure Scott overtook her on the upward track, fresh and happy from his walk along the moors, and there was a quick flash of brotherhood in his eyes new and gladdening to both. He came up to her gaily:

“Hallo! How are you? But I don’t ask. I see. Topping.”

“Topping!”

“And what have you been doing? Shall I

guess? Shooting ahead in judō?”

“Exactly.” She laughed joyfully up into his gay light-blue eyes. “Did you think I couldn’t?”

“I knew you would. I knew you’d never have come here if you couldn’t. Are you pleased with yourself?”

“And with everyone else. But tell me—why were you so long away?”

“Making psychic tests for one thing. Settling practical arrangements for India with Ito for another. And then I had to go down to Kobe to make arrangements—a place I hate. I go tomorrow.”

She stopped and looked up at him, startled for an instant. Once his going would have half broken her heart with fears and cares. Now though in their meeting they had drawn nearer, it had no taste of loss. Her heart had found companionship in oneness with all lives that touched her own.

“How I should have missed you a week ago!” she said, falling into step again and speaking rather to herself than to him.

“I know! And now, not at all,” he answered eagerly. “Yes, that’s the way of it! Where there are no distances there can be no division. That’s what Arimoto says. He knows a Chinese poem—I think Cranmer Byng did it into English. Lord bless me!—how stupid I am—

“‘O Keeper of my heart, I come by Liang’s
ford to thee,
And—’

Well, I can’t get it all, but it ends—

“‘O Liang Nan’s a hundred miles but in a
moment’s space
My soul has flown to Liang Nan and
touched a sleeping face.’

And really—no bluff about it!” he ended laughing. “We’ve been making experiments in—well, I suppose it’s what people would

call the higher telepathy if they knew anything about it. Sending thoughts and even sights to others across emptiness. Not that we go in for marvels, you know, but if a thing is really practical, why not do it? No use otherwise. I always think of the boy in India who self-hypnotized himself for fifteen years until he could walk on the water and—”

“I can very well guess what happened then!”

“Yes, just so! His master told him he was an idiot to waste time on doing what any ferryman could do for him for a penny. No—we’re working at useful things which no one else can do for us. It doesn’t do to neglect real workable stuff. Ito is much better at it than I. You must get him to teach you and then you can come over to India on a breeze! Oh, by the way!—he asked me to tell you he’s coming back in a week and he hopes you’re doing fine with your jujutsu. As a matter of fact I think he knew you were, from something he said last night.”

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“What was it?” Her voice needed no

controlling. His name came as easily to her as a song.

“He said, ‘Tell Yasoma sama that if the wild olive grew in Japan I would make a crown for her.’ So I suppose Arima told him or he felt it as I did the minute I saw you. He would! Oh, by the way!—I have a confession to make. I hope I didn’t do wrong. I had to go to the big hotel at Kobe, and it so happened that another man and I were the only Englishmen there. So we got talking. I can’t say I liked the look of him, but you know one has to be civil. A good-looking fellow too—but somehow—a case of ‘watch your step.’ He asked me a lot about the country round, and of course I told him all I could, and then after a long chin-wag he asked if by any chance I had met a friend of his—and he almost made me jump when he said ‘Miss Brandon.’”

Her hands clenched in each other, but she made no sign, uttered no word. If Scott thought her silence strange he passed it over and went on, but quicker, as if to get the thing done.

“He said his name was Maxwell, and he knew Mrs. Ascham and had a message for you from her. And now, if I had no business to butt in, forgive me, but I simply couldn’t stand the fellow and I felt every word was a lie. So I said, ‘I know nothing of Miss Brandon and if I did that’s the answer I should make. So you can take it for what it’s worth.’ And I marched out, and out of the hotel. Was I wrong?”

“You were right and I’m grateful. I will not see him,” she said. Her voice shook now. She clung like a drowning woman to the straw of self-control. “It doesn’t matter. How could it matter?” she was repeating passionately beneath her fixed smile.

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“You shall certainly not see him. There’s no way for him to find out where you are, and if he did do you think Arima or any of us would let you be hurt? He had better keep away, I can tell him!”

She was slowly regaining poise. It had been a

terrible shock, coming like a thunder-burst of doom into a sky so blue that it seemed it could rain only sunshine on a happy earth. But strong in the new joy of yesterday she would not let it break her. She gathered courage.

“If one could feel safe anywhere in the world it’s here. And Kobe is far off.”

“Rather! May I tell Arima what happened? He can take precautions.”

“I think I shall tell him myself. Thank you a thousand times. Would you like to run on now? You might be quicker.”

“What? Than you? I believe you could race me to the garden! Here—hold hands and run!”

Holding hands they ran like children to the top, and it did her good, stirred her blood, calmed her with a sense of strength and protection. Sayoko met them, all aglow with pleasure to see him again. That frank

innocent pleasure was bracing too. Maxwell, in that atmosphere, was as impossible to imagine as treachery. She pushed the thought from her and blotted it out with peace. It could not be. Arima, hard at work with hammer and nails and two of the men to help him with the carpentering shed, looked up as they came and greeted Scott with cool kindness.

“Come to me for a few words after we have eaten. Yasoma sama, how are you? 356
Come and let me examine your eyes.
They are sometimes a little blood-shot after the experience of yesterday.”

She took his naming her—the first time he had done it—for an advance in friendship. She had not even known he knew her name, and it came kindly from his stern mouth. She came forward, and he parted her eyelids, rolling them back that he might look deep into eyes gray as water flowing in moonlight.

“Well and good,” he said briefly. Then in Japanese: “Now get to your work. One of

your strong points consists in the movement with which you deceive the enemy. Perfect that and you will go high. See if you can mislead Arimoto sama's attack. No, my honorable niece—you have some way to go before you become a real judo-ka and reach the *atemi* which put life and death in your hands. Kano sama will work with you now. Go along, lazy one!"

Sayoko's laughter was as unspoiled as silver bells, and they were all moving off when he sent his voice after them.

"Yasoma sama, I have news that your pictures with the gentleman who brought them are on the way up the hill. They should arrive at two o'clock. I propose that at four we should all meet in the Meditation Hall to welcome such guests—by far the most noble and distinguished that I have ever known. I have made arrangements for their attendant to be received with honor and to be escorted to Kobe on his return."

Now he was laughing with sheer delight all

over his stern face. She could hardly have thought it was Arima. Sayoko clapped her hands, and a wave of pleasure swept over all who heard. Yasomo rejoiced with them as though she herself had shared in a gift of flawless beauty.

Slowly and firmly she closed the doors of fear against the thought that Maxwell could trace her. She was too happy to suffer continuously, and besides her brain, always cool and reasonable, rebelled against the possibility of his finding out her refuge. She could scarcely imagine a man more helpless than one of his type would be in a strange land where the language and people were both unknown to him, and if he came Arima would very well know how to deal with him. She had only to say that he had insulted her. And in a week—Ito!

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Arimoto acknowledged that morning that her work was fine. She absorbed his teaching with determination—quickly and certainly. They bowed after the lesson was done, and he said, bending his thoughtful dark gaze upon

her:

“You could already deal with any but a man of remarkable skill. And may I be permitted to say your Japanese accent is very good? My English though I understand perfectly and can read without trouble is not perfect. Would it be disagreeable—”

She eagerly anticipated his hope: “If we spoke English when we meet? I should be delighted. Would you and Arima sama like it if I gave an hour or two every day to talking English with you and anyone else who wants to keep it up?”

He thanked her warmly and accepted. A new interest. The walls that guarded their spiritual city were becoming her citadel also. As they parted she asked in English:

“Do you mind telling me how long I was unconscious yesterday? I forgot to ask. I seemed to myself to go off immediately.”

“It is my pleasure to tell. I did used the *okuri-*

eri—what is that?—the sliding collar. It is not too easy if a man fought. This you will know. But you did not fought and went quick. Arima sama counted twenty-four 358 second. I have not seen so quick before. I think then—as if you glad to going.”

“I was glad.” She hesitated a moment. Then: “Did I say anything? Did you and Arima sama know where I went?”

“No word. You laid dead. I could know if I put myself in a man’s—”

He halted for a word, and she supplied —“Consciousness?”

“Yes—that. But always only if a man ask himself—” He shook his head and said laughing, “Too difficult!”—and went on in Japanese. “I mean, we who are instructed could certainly use the man’s consciousness if we wished—but it is a point of honor in our judō never to do this unless before a witness the man asks it.”

“And do they often ask?”

“I have known it twenty-four times. You see they very often forget what they perceive, and wise men know it is very wonderful to open the door to ‘the man inside one’ and see what he is doing. But it is a troublesome thing for the operator. He must be prepared beforehand.”

They were walking up the garden now, and as their ways parted she put another question:

“Have you ever seen anyone receive *satori*—the full Enlightenment—in this way?”

He answered instantly:

“Never. That is quite different. It is pouring pure water into pure water. And it is surprising how many men see and know nothing in this death. The door between is too closely shut. Hundreds and hundreds of men go through the strangling simply to harden their nerves and because it is a kind of tradition in judō. And they see nothing. It is

only those who have been trained in the esoteric side who can either give or receive the right impetus to the open door. I knew you had it.”

“How could you know?”

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“I cannot tell. It is a force which sets one’s own force to work. You should go far.”

He added laughing:

“Do not encourage people to think this is a useful way to the ‘man inside.’ Arima sama and other masters declare that not one man in eighty gets anything from the strangulation but hardened nerves and a headache.”

She detained him a moment longer:

“You said ‘death.’ It is really death?”

“That I do not know,” he said thoughtfully.

“We think a man may be alive after the doctors pronounce him dead. But I should say it certainly gives a foretaste of death. It is a strange thing. You have now to learn *kwappo*

—our first means of resuscitation; and after that, when he judges it well, Arima sama will teach you the secrets of *aiki* and the *kiai* cry. But, with that blow I taught you today, you can meanwhile kill a man. I assure you he will not say ‘*Domo! ii kokoromochi da!*’ (What a pleasant sensation!)”

He strode off leaving new thankfulness behind him and a shining hope. Suppose that experience had opened a door never to be shut again, to be used in any need and with no mechanical help. The body forgotten—two dewdrops on the same lotus-leaf running together to form a new sphere of light:

“O Keeper of my heart, I come by Liang’s
ford to thee.”

Sleep itself might be the mighty Opener of the Gate and fold her children together to her breast. She went singing on her way.

In the afternoon the rush of hurrying feet outside the house of the Arimas told her the pictures had arrived, and she ran out to see—

gay and glittering with pleasure. Arima was talking with a man whom she remembered well, the right-hand man of the great firm her father had always employed in matters connected with his pictures. He looked strange and out of place among the crowding figures and evidently recognized her with relief mixed with a desire to get away with his assistant as soon as his rather alarming commission was fulfilled.

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“This gentleman,” he said, doubtfully indicating Arima in his earth-stained garden-kit, “tells me there’s a fireproof storehouse, and I needn’t tell you, madam, that immediate insurance should be effected according to this letter from Messrs. Tessier which I hereby hand you. There’s a receipt to be signed after you have examined the pictures. And I think that’s all.”

A more extraordinary meeting of the commonplace and unusual surely never took place than this for which she was responsible. Inward glee shook her as she noticed Mr. Appleton’s strong disapprobation of any

civility on the part of Arima; and what could his opinion be of a fine young London lady, the very flower of fashion as he remembered her, transformed into a sunburnt peasant girl in a blue cotton dress and a handkerchief twisted about her black hair? If Ito had been there he would have been a connecting link with civilization, for his manners were coolly unmistakable. In his absence Yasoma and Arima themselves inspired distrust much aggravated by the crowding “foreigners,” as Mr. Appleton evidently felt them to be though in their own country.

He pointedly refused an invitation to stay the night and said coldly that if “the gentleman” wished to take in one or two of the pictures to show “the party” he would busy himself in preparing the rest for Miss Brandon’s inspection and would then take his receipt and depart to catch the night express at Hida, having a young man who would serve as interpreter until he was safely on board the return boat. His objection to Japan was so strongly marked that even the Japanese desisted from civilities and with a

snubbed air stifling mirth filed into the hall after Yasoma and Arima, the “attendant” carrying an armful of slender boxes. He counted them rigorously, waited until they were opened and recognized and immediately hurried out to rejoin his master. Europe was protesting with all her might against the aberrations of Asia in both. Yet it was easy to forget him when she saw the listening faces bright with eager intelligence raised to where she stood beside Arima by the reading-desk. What could be the bread broken before them, the wine shared?

Arima unrolled the first picture, hung on ivory rolls with ivory pendants, painted on ancient creamy silk laid on faded blue brocade, and said aloud. “The Painted Dragon Hall, by Li Lung-Mien,”—his own face warmed into eager life by the beauty he touched with worshiping fingers.

“You like it?” she whispered, and only a shiver of delight answered.

A hall of books, the tablets and scrolls

treasured like offerings to dim and meditative deities of wisdom. Before them an aged student engaged with his writing-dish and brush, looking upward, the long folds of his blue and black robe falling like veils about him, a portion of the wall where a misty sunbeam struck it painted with soaring golden dragons.

She took up a brief poem, exquisitely translated by Cranmer Byng which (though it was many centuries younger), her father had kept with the picture as interpreting its spirit, and read aloud:

“In an old Library—

“Ten thousand tomes with pendant discs of
jade,
Bowls of old Shang with bronze of Chow
displayed,
And suddenly the small
Tinkle of girdle-gems floats through the
Hall
As though the wind-custodian sings: 362
‘I guard the fragrance of a thousand

springs.
Draw near! draw near!
Ten thousand yesterdays are gathered
here.””

A sigh of pleasure and the hissing intake of breath wherewith the Japanese testify respect ran about the hall, as Arima taking the picture handed it to the first group that all might examine it. Some thought of the immense ancience of China, and her withered hands folded about the sacred lamp of Beauty to guard its flame, though the unchanging ages gave to all the touch of melancholy—“the sense of tears in mortal things” which in Japanese is called *awarē*. To the Japanese, knowing their infinite debt of art to the land now passing through the testing flame, the sadness was as potent as the beauty, and many recalled the words of their countryman Kamo Mabuchi concerning the touching loveliness of things seen in afterthought through the veil of the past.

The second series of pictures was opened immediately, and Yasoma, who had forgotten

it because she had never understood it, was amazed to see what Arima might easily consider the gem of the collection. It was a long-lost series of ten pictures known as “The Taming of the Bull,” the masterpiece of a great Sung painter who beheld in Zen the solution of the riddle of the universe and set his skill of brush and might of vision to declare the process. She saw Arima pale with emotion, and heard a sound like the rustling of a breeze through the men, scarcely one of whom was unqualified to feel the greatness of a moment which brought them face to face with wonder as they saw a crown-jewel of the Faith. She put the first picture in his hand, saying:

“This is beyond me to explain. Please speak for me.” She herself would never forget the scene as he unrolled each in turn, his hands shaking as he raised the first.

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“In the first picture of the series the man has lost his bull. That is to say—his senses are roaming wild and unguided. He cannot tame them, for he cannot find them. His nature is

beyond his understanding. See his dismay!
He realizes what he has lost, and for reply
only the crickets sing in the wood.”

As each was described it was handed to the
seated men.

“Searching at long last, he sees the tracks of
the bull. With confused anxiety he searches,
and in vain. In the next a bird sings on the
branches. It is hope.

“In this—the third—he finds the means of
search. His senses are drawing into harmony.
Harmony, as yet not to be understood,
pervades them as salt suffuses water. There is
no place wherein the bull can hide. He
knows.

“And in this, the bull is found, but he plunges
madly hither and thither, eluding and
wearying the man who hopes to subjugate
him. At last he is roped, but even then is
ungovernable. See the furious plunges, the
struggles to escape!

“In this—hold fast to rope and rod, lest again the bull should escape; mastered and tended he will grow docile. Later, rope and rod disused, he will follow his master. Therefore persevere. . . .

“In this picture the bull is conquered. His master rides him home, making music upon a flute, careless now of the bull, who transports him where he will. The brute—the sensual nature in man—is tamed, makes melody and forgets.

“In this, he is at home and at peace. The bull is forgotten. He has disappeared. The useless rod and rope lie beside the man, who meditates in undisturbed serenity.

“And this—most strange, but all here will understand—is an empty circle. See the noble certainty with which it is flung upon the silk! It is the Void. The heart is swept clear and empty to receive Infinity.

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“And in this—the man sits serene, unmoved. No discipline is now needed. The river flows

beside him. Nature pursues her outward transformations in blossom and fruit. He observes and mirrors what he observes. All that was to be achieved in him is achieved. The rest is silence. That mystery cannot be told.

“And in this the tenth and last is fruition. The cottage door is closed. He does not live among the cloistered wise but among the careless, the eaters and wine-bibbers; and from him radiates the power that makes such men Buddhas. See, he lays his hand upon a dead tree, and it bursts into blossom. All is accomplished. The man is divine.”

Silence filled the Hall with thought and quiet. How long it lasted none knew. Then for the last time Arima raised his voice.

“Each day for a time this series will be brought out that all may learn wisdom from the hand of Beauty. The rest will follow in due course. Let us thank the friend and fellow student who has made a way for us to vision in which she herself shares.”

All rose and bowed to Yasoma, and an eager band gathered about the ten pictures before they were taken with care to Arima's fireproof godown.

She went slowly out alone, filled with such joy that only one thing could make it gladder. Outside, Mr. Appleton awaited her with stern propriety and escorted her to the godown where on a long rough table, deeply unworthy in his eyes of such immense money values as it supported, the pictures were laid out to be checked and acknowledged. To Mr. Appleton it was nothing less than appalling that pictures each valued at anything from eighteen thousand pounds upwards to the starry heights of finance should be in the careless keeping of a young woman who, as he had observed to his assistant, looks "more like a plow-girl than anything else you could name and enough to make Sir Godfrey Brandon turn in his grave."

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The receipt was signed, and the unhappy pictures restored each to its narrow cell and all were placed in the two packing cases.

Yasoma turned to bid a polite good-by to the most English of Englishmen. His whole being shed icy disapproval upon the scene, and her thanks froze in polar air.

“And now we may say good-by, I think, since you really prefer to get back to Kobe,” she ended.

“I thank you, madam. You will understand that naturally I have not mentioned the pictures to anyone met on the way. The customs officials passed them on the ground that they were to remain in Japan though it took me some days to put it through. This letter will give you particulars of the sum to be paid if you should change your intention and use them only for exhibitions of the kind. It would probably be returned eventually. I should add that the value being so great they should be mentioned to no one. A gentleman at the Kobe Hotel observed the address on one and made a kind of careless inquiry as to the contents, which I discouraged at once.”

“A Japanese gentleman?”

To herself her voice sounded strained and unnatural, but Mr. Appleton was unmoved.

He rejected the word “gentleman” pointedly and replied:

“Not a Japanese, madam. The gentleman was English and observed that he had the pleasure of your acquaintance. He made a note of the address and asked no more questions.”

There was nothing more to say. He bowed and looked at his watch.

“Then I will wish you good-by, madam, and should be obliged if you would communicate your approval to my firm.”

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She asked a last question:

“When did you meet this gentleman?”

“Two days ago, madam. I wish you good-by.”

It was over. Still clad in disapprobation as in

a garment, Mr. Appleton and his assistant walked to the brow of the hill where rickshas and the coolies who had carried the pictures awaited them. They disappeared, and the hills gradually began to reassert themselves and to recover. Sayoko came up, half moved, half laughing:

“Oh how it recalls England, Soma sama! I feel that all the British Empire visited us today and said it was ashamed of us.

“If you want to hide yourself in the North
Star,
Turn round and fold your hands behind the
South Star.’

But even there they would have hated us.
Never mind! How can I thank you for today?
It has made a beauty here more beautiful than
all the riches of the world. If I had anything
to give worth taking—”

Her bright eyes shone as she looked at her friend. Yasoma answered in a voice so low that it could scarcely be heard.

“If you felt like a trapped animal that hears the steps of the trapper coming nearer, what would you want, Sayoko sama?”

In great amazement Sayoko answered:
“Pity?”

Yasoma shook her head. “I think death is better than pity.”

There was silence, then with an attempt at a smile she said:

“I’m so tired I don’t know *what* I mean!
Sleep well, Sayoko sama.”

She went down alone and sat with Bridget, feverish and miserable, neither speaking nor eating. This was her day of joy! So it would always be, shame and fear dogging her until the end.

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At last, wearied out, exhausted with panic, she fell asleep in fear that made the memory of dawn dreadful.

Yet in her sleep, peace came wandering

through the night crowned with stars and led her like a child over the bridge of Arima into the lovely land beyond.

Silver moonlight rained upon the broad river flowing like molten silver to the sea. Silver lights slipped off the leaves to silver the way her happy feet must tread. Black and silver the rocks melted from beauty of revelation to beauty of mystery. And with his face in the silver glory of moonlight Ito waited above with hands stretched for hers.

Side by side they sat with clasped hands in a communion of joy beyond all imagining, lifted above time and distance, in a land where danger, death, division are forgotten, passion burnt to ash but the white flame of union subsisting, gemlike, unflickering.

So the night passed, and she woke in the morning to lift the burden of the hard white daylight with more courage—but a courage strangely devoid of hope.

Chapter Twenty-two

A few hours later and Scott had come to make his farewell and had passed out of her life for years if not forever. He had no plans. He went as he was sent, taking the two Indians with him. It left a wistfulness—no more, though she knew that often her thoughts would turn to the kind light-blue eyes set so oddly in his tanned face. “Good bread for daily use!” she said to herself, thinking of his cheerful good-by.

“And if I can I’ll try and look in upon you after the fashion we’ve been practicing at the monastery. Promise not to be frightened! I’ll swear not to come in a white sheet and gibber at you.”

“Frightened? Why on earth should I? Come along!” she said smiling. And then on a graver note: “I have a feeling that we shall meet again before very long. Have you?”

“I’ll rummage for it because I want awfully to see you again. Look here—I’ve never said it properly but I’m proud as a dog with two tails of your jujutsu! You’ll soon knock me into a cocked hat.”

“I’ll try. Now—will you promise to write? And I’ll tell you all that goes on here.”

“Do. I smell change!” he said a little gravely, and presently was off, swinging away down the hill. He turned at the corner to flourish his hat and was gone.

“And as nice a young man as I’d ask to see in a month of Sundays!” said 369 Bridget, gazing dolefully after him. “I declare I’d be as sorry to see the seams of his stockings as I would to drop a shilling and pick up sixpence! So I would! ’Tis him for the cheerful word! Well, come in and have

your breakfast, Miss Soma. More was lost when Rome was burnt when all's said and done—and if the sun went out we'd have to do with a candle. Come on in!”

He had brought her a letter from Eleanor Ascham and after breakfast she opened it. Curiously enough it began with Scott's last word:

“Change. I feel change in your letters that rejoices me. I wonder if you know how happy you are. You are living in a white light of beauty where every color has been tempered to make its radiance. One might really be afraid to have so much if it were not the sort of happiness that has no relation to time and distance. You say John Scott has a camera. Ask him to photograph you for me. I want to see if it shows in your face. A month after you get this I am coming to Japan. Now, listen—I can perfectly well understand you may shrink from the idea of any change. Ask Ito which is best for you. I shall be a long time in Japan, and there will be many opportunities of meeting.”

It was a long letter, and she read it with more pleasure than ever before. Yes, of course, she would ask Ito. What fine instinct had led Eleanor Ascham to that conclusion?

The rest of the day seemed dreamlike to her afterwards when she sat alone trying to recall what had happened on the other side of the gulf that opened. Change indeed! The word tolled like a knell.

But she had gone up as usual, finding her friends a little shadowed by Scott's going. Her jujutsu had been excellent. It was as though the secret of the new locks flashed into her mind almost without teaching. Arimoto said:

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“It sometimes seems to happen like that. A sudden change in the way one looks at it—a leap into far greater skill. Your work is quite different from yesterday. Infinitely better. Arima sama would say there is nothing you might not be taught now—when your body catches up with your mind.”

Change again. The same note struck by all. Then, the field work. Sayoko was charming; there was a touch of unusual beauty in her words, and before they went into the Hall where Arimoto and three other men were waiting for an English lesson she said, touching Yasoma's hand shyly:

“I think we Japanese say too little what we feel—but it is never that we do not feel it. I must tell you how much you have done here —”

Yasoma put her hand over Sayoko's lips.

“No—I've done nothing. But why must you tell me today?”

“I don't know. It is not a day like other days, but an ending and a beginning. Perhaps because today three friends have gone. Do you think?”

“Perhaps,” Yasoma agreed.

The play Arimoto had brought for reading

was “The Tempest” and at the end, when he read the apostrophe of Prospero aloud while Arima who had come silently in stood listening, the mighty words rolled upon her like the booming of a great bell tolling desolation over a ruined country.

“Our revels now are ended. These our
actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous
palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant 371
faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.”

Change again! the passing of old things into new forms, strange and sad to those who loved the old. Closing the talk, Arima emerged from his silence to quote the words

of the Gautama Buddha:

“Just as when boys or girls play with little sand-castles so long as they are not rid of desire, affection, thirst, feverish longing, and craving, just so long do they delight in them and set store by them. But as soon as they are rid of all these sensations, straightway with hand and foot they break up and scatter these little sand-castles and cease to play with them. For the destruction of craving is The Peace. Be of good cheer! I to counsel! I to uphold! I to teach!” He added: “Shakespeare’s universal genius knew this also.”

“Possessing nothing and clinging to nothing!” said one of the men, and Arima assented. They went out quietly, leaving the empty hall to silence, and she went alone down the hill filled with a sense of awe helpless in the face of impending change.

That evening after their supper she sat alone in the garden, not reading, lost in memory and thought so blended with the hope of Ito’s

return that it was impossible to divide past and future. But what would their meeting be? Would the union of those states of vision impinge on the daily consciousness or be held so rigidly apart that the one would be definitely heaven, the other earth? She supposed it must be so. She must live on the certainty that both states were one, living by faith, with no demonstration of it in the long and weary days apart. Grief and endurance, and the veil lifted at night for how brief a moment! She remembered sadly a lovely story of William Morris's—"East of the Sun, West of the Moon"—where in a land of twilight dreams lovers loved, forever young and beautiful, he awaking at dawn into the harsh realities of the world. And once, as he sat alone, remembering, it had become intolerable that day should steal what night restored and in agony the forbidden longing broke from his lips:

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“O my own Love, my worshipped Sweet,
Would God that your beloved feet
Might bless my threshold this same night!”

Called, she must step down into this
fantasmal world we call reality, and with her
bodily advent the true reality of dream was
shattered once and forever; and other eyes
having profaned her loveliness it vanished
into its native Paradise of pure realization,
and he wandered the earth alone, dry-lipped,
famished, thirsting with passion for the white
wings lost within the blue.

Would that be her fate? Or could any
discipline enable her to live in the high world
which is seen only in clear dream and solemn
vision?

Even as the thought shaped in her mind a
most terrible longing to see him possessed
and shook her like a leaf. What? Have we not
bodies? May not their pure desire for the
touch, the sight of the one Beloved be
satisfied? Is it wrong to worship Love, lovely
in its beginning, in its middle and its ending?
Had not the sight of Beatrice walking with
lowered eyelids in the streets of Florence,
bowing her head in salutation, sent Dante
through his bitter pilgrimage to Hell and

Purgatory, his starry ascent to Paradise?

“Now shall I write of this Lady what has
been written of no other lady.”

How could it have been without the dear physical contact? No voice reminded her that it was not until Beatrice lay dead with that Lord of Love “most terrible of aspect” looking down upon her closed eyelids that the soul of Dante began its true pilgrimage among the stars.

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They went too far here, she thought; they made the way too lonely. All she asked was that they should work together, see each other, that she might cling to his strength when the way skirted stark precipices and sought the darkness of dangerous woods. Longing grew into passion and possessed her, quickening every heartbeat until it shattered earthly limits as an acorn growing in a vase of porcelain shatters it with the thrust of mighty roots bearing aloft a tower of boughs and leaves to the sky. She was Longing and no more. So, in a story of old Japan, a woman

insane with love of a young monk is transfigured by the passion in her into the likeness of a dragon which, pursuing him to the huge golden bell under which he has sought refuge, coils about it in her dragon-form glowing and spuming fire, biting the bell in her rage denied until it glows white-hot and the man beneath is struck into ash. For thought is the only creator, and as an inner thought shapes so must the man or woman be.

So strong was the desire in her, desire of the heart—not of the flesh, though that also cried aloud for sight and hearing, that it seemed it drew apart and out from her like a shape of her creation. “I will bring him. He shall come.” And she could have imagined that she saw a white shadow flitting down the darkness with purpose. She knew that never in all her life had she so gathered desire and mingling it with will made it a force to move mountains. What would come of it? What? For this was mastery. Had not Arima, speaking of love, said: “You walk on the confines of power.” Confines? She had

crossed them and would have her will.
Thought is the only true force in the world.
Thought reenforced by love is irresistible.

The night went on with its silent march 374
of stars. Bridget's patient light expired
as she laid down her needle and praying slept.
The priest's had long been darkened. And
still Yasoma sat fixed and waiting for what
she knew as certainly must come as that will
is a force which if concentrated flies like an
arrow to its mark.

"I will see him."

If a dying voice pleaded, "He is the wiser—
the stronger; let him choose," she had no pity
on herself and it.

Steps heard far off in the breathless silence
came nearer and up the track. She rose
instantly and went like a hurrying wind to the
place where the temple track met the other.
Never a doubt. Certainty, and joy so exultant
that it filled her like the onrush of divinity.
She could not restrain her heart and went a

few steps downward that not one minute might spill and be lost from the full vessel of bliss.

He came, bareheaded, walking swiftly in the gray kimono he wore always in her dreams, and the setting moon shone so palely on his face that for a moment with a stab of misery she thought:

“Dream again! only dream!”

But it was he, though the meeting had much in it that was strange. He stretched his hands and took hers into them, and his were warm and living.

“Hours ago your call came to me. I knew it was some great need and I put everything aside and came. I have walked as if the wind drove me. What is it? I could not read your thought—I could not understand. But you need me—What is it? Were we not together? Was it not enough?”

She said in a choked voice:

“No—not enough. I must see you and hear your voice. I must be able to tell you my griefs and joys. You must tell me when I am wrong, praise me when I am right. Else it is nothing—nothing.”

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He echoed “Nothing?” as if in amazement and was silent. They were walking slowly hand in hand to where the great clump of bushes obscured the entrance to the temple. These stood black as night in heavy shadow. Beside them she stopped and looked up pitifully into his eyes.

“Nothing. You live in some strange heaven I can never make mine. When in a dream we are together it is enough—oh, more than enough at the time; but when I wake again into utter loneliness how am I to bear it? You control our dreams. You still everything into a wonderful calm, and I rest as they used to say the angels do with gazing at God. But when I wake I want *my* things. Such little things they must seem to you! I want to ask you questions, to laugh with you, be tired with you, shut my hand in yours, see your

eyes soften when you look at me. Never,
never once in the day have I seen that! Let me
see it once—once only! Even if I die of joy!”

He stood looking down at her.

“You ask to be two instead of one. Of those
blessed nights I have said—

“‘Now there is meeting between us,
A dream-bridge over wild grass.
I see that the Law is perfect.’

Yes, perfect. We are one in the utter Truth.
No need to speak, to look—to know is
oneness. Distance, nothing, Time
meaningless. Now you have called to the
flesh that divides, the senses that hold us
apart, and I am I, you are you. I hold your
hand, but Death and Division hold it with me.
There—in the One Country I asked nothing,
nor did you give. This is Love’s fall—the fall
of man. Is it better than the best?”

“Better a million times, for I hold you,
I touch you. I know you are no dream.

You are mine. When I wake from the dream you are mine no longer—oh, the long miserable day!”

His hands clasped hers more firmly.

“You have dragged us from Truth and Deliverance into the deadly dream of the senses. Dear, I was near you, and now we are apart. Here, terrible things lie in wait for love and insight. Be content with the best, beloved. Let me go. I called you to the best. You call us down. Let me go!”

“Never!” She clung fiercely to his hands. “See how little I ask! Only to be with you, to serve you, to love you with all I am, and to know you love me. I need it more than any other woman in the world, for I am worthless, and without you what chance have I? You don’t know why I left London.”

She saw his face through tears of shame and agony—the set quiet of his mouth, the infinite tenderness of his eyes.

“I knew. How could we be one in the Land of all Truth and I not know? But in that land it was nothing—a motiveless deed of folly blown on a wind of nothingness, and forgotten.”

She threw herself against him and choked her sobs against his shoulder, still clinging to his hand.

“But now—in this world to which you have called our love we meet where deeds cannot be recalled, where they walk weeping and ashamed, followed by the shadow of their consequences. Dear, why have you done it? You were safer there.”

“No—no. With you!” she said almost inaudibly.

He sighed, and the patient sound as of a man who sees and notwithstanding bears with the ignorance of blindness struck grief silent in her and turned it to fear.

“Have I done very wrong? Can’t we be

together?” She looked up with wild wet eyes. He put a protecting hand on her hair.

“You must let me think—and more than think—know. You drew me by our oneness, but we move now—not in the land beyond Arima’s garden but where skulking things walk in the dark.”

“Do you wish I had not called you?”

“I cannot tell. I may yet be glad. Do not grieve over it. When we both know and understand nothing will matter. All will be light. Now, go in.”

She said, trembling with cold foreboding:

“You have forgiven me. Then will you kiss me? Once—once only!”

Strange—the reality of meeting, as she would have called it, was more unreal now by far than the sight and touch of vision. It was as though a cold wind began to divide them, blowing in a waste place of loneliness that

drove them apart. He said:

“Would you sit in the dark with a rushlight instead of standing in the sun? *How* shall I make you know? There are things—”

It seemed to her at that moment that to loose her physical hold of him would be spiritual and physical death. Her whole face quivered like a child’s in grief.

“But if we belonged to each other—” The rest choked in her throat.

“We more than belong to each other. We are one. Never was any earthly lovers’ love like what we knew. Don’t you know? *Why* will you have less?”

Dim visionary gleams of light flickered in her great darkness. He went on, speaking quietly but with intense feeling. The clasp of his hand was so strong that it hurt hers.

“You are on the edge of knowing—all. Can’t you see? You should not trouble about little

things.”

“Little? To be with you? Little? It’s life and heaven and all. You hurt me to death when you call it little.”

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He lifted her chin and looked deep into her eyes.

There followed a silence full of meanings passing in vibration from one to the other. It was as though she said, “But how can I live without your bodily presence?” And he answered: “As a picture stands to the bodily presence, so is that to realization, for against that the years beat in vain and it looks down untroubled upon life and death.” Again her heart cried: “You would forget me; further each day from your vision withdrawn, I in the sunset and you in the dawn.” And again the reply: “Never. We are held in the Unity that can neither be severed nor sever.”

Presently he said:

“I should like some day to show you

something I wrote down. My own way over the bridge in Arima's garden. Read it when you are alone and then destroy it or show it to anyone whom it could help. I give it to you to use as you please. Will you take it?"

There was nothing in all the world that could have so gladdened her at that moment. To be trusted—to be found worthy. And then a quick fear shook her.

"Yes, but you should keep it. You could tell people far—far better than I. Why don't you do that? Why do you give it to me?"

"Several reasons. Now—you must go."

They went past the bell side by side. Into her exhaustion a kind of cold peace was stealing like a passionless white fall of snow. Almost she thought the great bell stirred and sent a low golden note growing—growing in volume, until it flowed wide and far like the oncoming of a mighty wave carrying the ocean in its vast curve of lights and perfections. She could not think; she could

only feel the goodness at the heart of things; but for the moment it was enough and too much. It filled her world to such overflowing that it seemed its bounds must break and flow into eternity. But when he was gone—

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As they stood at the parting of the ways a man's step came up the track—the stones jarring beneath foreign heels. And as it drew nearer the same intuition arrested both. It had come. . . .

“Go back at once,” Ito said. “At once. Leave it to me.”

Without a word she turned aside and making as if to go back slipped instead into the shelter of the bushes. She must know. She must see. The steps came up and on; the scent of a cigar came before them. A man's voice humming a song to himself to time his steps. The inevitable past had overtaken her.

Maxwell walking in his shirt-sleeves, his coat on his arm, saw a tall Japanese standing by

the way into the temple. Confidence in Japanese Westernization invited him to ask in English:

“Can you tell me if an English young lady and her maid are living here? They told me so in the village below. Oh, perhaps you don’t know English? This is the direction I was given.”

He tendered a paper with Japanese writing upon it. Ito answered immediately.

“Certainly they live here.”

“You speak English uncommonly well,” said the other in a tone of surprise; then added: “Very lucky. Perhaps you can advise me. I want to meet her.”

Maxwell was not certain whether this stranger was worthy to be treated as a gentleman or not. It might be a servant—just an ordinary fellow in an ordinary kimono. Why waste civility? The almighty tip speaks every language under the sun. He took out a

few yen and held them up.

“That’s payment for help! I must see Miss Brandon. Will you take a message tomorrow morning and tell me where I can put up tonight? They said there was a room here.”

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“There is no room here. You cannot see Miss Brandon.”

Maxwell moved threateningly nearer:

“That’s damned impertinence. Who are you, I should like to know, to interfere?”

“I am the person empowered by Miss Brandon to say she declines to see you.”

Maxwell threw aside the butt of his cigar.

“I believe that to be a deliberate lie.”

Silence. He went on:

“I believe that a scoundrelly Japanese may have excellent reasons for desiring that Miss

Brandon should not meet a fellow countryman who could rescue her and her money from a pack of fools and knaves. I've heard of you all down below."

He waited for an answer. There was none. Ito pulled his kimono up into its black belt with a quick gesture and then stood stiff and silent in the middle of the path.

"I don't wonder you find it a little difficult to answer," said the other. "Kindly move out of the way. I'm going in."

"By what right?"

"That's no concern of yours."

Ito moved a step forward. "I shall not let you pass."

Not a word did Maxwell waste. He dropped his coat and made at Ito, throwing all his strength and weight into the charge, plunging like a mad bull at a gate. He had no faintest doubt of the issue. How could it occur to him

that weight and strength combined with skill in boxing had anything to fear? Ito smiled—so simple was the game. It would have been easy for him to kill the furious man with any one of the secret locks, but these he avoided. He threw his man by the loin-throw, and as he staggered to his feet caught him again with two lightning swift blows and stood over him to insure the end of the match.

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The unexpected. Maxwell saw red. His hand went to his pocket and as he lay he fired blindly from the hip at the man above him, and before Yasoma could struggle from the blinding branches he was making off down the road, running madly, and again she was alone with Ito—but with a ruined world about them.

No one had heard. The quiet night closed like disturbed water over the gap of sound. It was as though it had never been. She tried desperately to move him and could not, and then, wild and white, rushed up the winding track for help. It seemed eternity but was nothing but a few minutes before Bridget, the

priest, and his acolyte were at the spot. In terrified silence they struggled back with him to the priest's living-room in the darkened silence of the temple. The priest remained with them. The acolyte was sent running at full speed to the house of Arima while Yasoma and Bridget cut away the blood-soaked cotton shirt from his breast and bathing it stanching the blood and poured a few drops of brandy between the clenched teeth.

She thought he was dead, and in the stunning shock neither that nor anything else mattered—why should it in a world where all is death and the shadow of death? It seemed to her neither long nor short in time but only an immeasurable agony before they heard swiftly running footsteps and Arima dashed in with a man named Kodama, the one doctor among the students. The others fell back, and they took their places, careless who went or stayed, careless as to the cause, intent only on their patient. To Yasoma all seemed a hopeless travesty of reality—a thing that could not be, as phantoms seen on the screen

who love, hate, suffer, in emotions less unreal and transitory than those of the world of men.

But Ito did not move. Black brows and black lashes intensified the bronze pallor, his face already assuming the calm, untouched by smile or sorrow, which deepens as the world recedes into the dimness of the far past, the backward forgetful look before the soul has viewed the new orbit on which it must travel. 382

Presently Arima rose from his knees and stood looking gravely down upon his friend. Kodama had risen also; he whispered a word with his eyes fixed on Arima.

“Would he choose to return?” said Arima as though thinking aloud. “A cripple? Well—we do not choose. We obey.”

He flung one arm out and cried aloud in a voice that shook the room like the blast of a whirlwind.

“*Ito—Ito!*”

Yasoma had drifted beyond hope, almost beyond the power of thought. It meant nothing to her—a harsh and cruel noise breaking brutally in upon the gathering peace isolating him surely from them all. “Let him rest—ah, let him rest!” was the cry of her inmost heart. Bridget, no longer handing water, linen, to the men, knelt beside her and put her arm about her shoulders. Her lips moved in prayer, but Yasoma’s were dumb. It appeared that every energy in the room but her own converged upon the peace before them resolute to break it.

It broke. The lashes trembled, the lips parted. Then Arima spoke to Kodama.

“Now,” he said, and instantly the other went to work.

He turned to Yasoma. “I think it is men’s work now. We thank you.”

She stumbled out with Bridget’s arm about her, and even yet could not collect her thoughts into reason. They dizzied her. She

and Bridget sat under the veranda in
glaring moonlight, terrible to her in its
white intensity, and not a word passed
between them. The moon had set and the dark
was thinning when Arima came out alone.

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“I will now ask if you know anything of what
has happened?”

“But will he live?” Yasoma said passionately.
“Tell me that first.”

He looked down upon her with his
extraordinary quiet.

“We believe he will live, but probably will be
a cripple. I send now for a great doctor who
has come for a while to some people near
Midorigawa. Will you please speak? What
has happened?”

She and Arima stood apart, for he had sent
Bridget to help Kodama. She saw his purpose
in that and told her story without emotion,
dryly, sparing herself in nothing. His first
motion when it was done was to call the

young acolyte and writing a few particulars to send him in haste to the police-station in the village far below before he returned to Yasoma. She stood exactly as he had left her, but raised her head as she heard his step.

“And of course I shall leave this morning. Please tell me where I should stay to be near when I am wanted.”

Another man might have mistaken her dry composure for apathy or defiance, but Arima was not likely to make that mistake. He knew the stifled agony and pitied her profoundly, but unblinded by his own pity saw through it to future possibilities of which it was useless to speak. For a moment after she had finished he stood in thought she could by no means fathom. She could not even make the effort. It was as much as she could do to hold herself together in body and mind from utter collapse.

At last he spoke.

“All this will be sad for you. We

cannot keep the world out of it. Have you strength to suffer?"

"I know of no strength, but I can do what I must."

"That is strength. Do you wish to leave us?"

"Of course. I want you to cast me out and disown me and forget I was ever here. I have injured you frightfully. It is I who have done all this."

If there was passion in the words' meaning there was none in her utterance of them. The same dry composure. He was equally composed but with something behind it that glowed like a hidden jewel in its mine.

"I do not wish you to go. Nor will anyone here. We do not forsake those who trust us."

"Doesn't that depend on what they are worth? I came here on false pretenses. Only one thing I ask—don't tell my old nurse the worst of me. She's a good woman and it would

break her heart.”

“Certainly not. If I have your permission to request I beg you will not mention that one point to any person. It does not bear on motives, and the rest is sufficient for the purposes of justice. In your evidence you should not speak of it. You should say you had refused to marry him. Is not that true?”

She acquiesced apathetically. What did it matter one way or another?

“Very well. But let us go. Would Kobe be near enough?”

“It would be too far. I wish to keep you here and that you should lead your daily life as usual.”

“I cannot stay. I cannot do it,” she said obstinately. “I’m not fit to be here and I’ll get back to my right place. You can’t convince me.”

Arima did not try. His dark rough-hewn face,

strongly Japanese, showed neither tenderness nor any relaxation into discussion. He said briefly:

“This is what Ito sama would wish. To that statement I have nothing to add, except this. No one here will recognize any fault in you if that one point is kept secret. All else will be attributed to some madness of Western manners. You can live here as you have lived hitherto.”

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“Yes—as a hypocrite—a black sheep pretending to be white. A nice friend for your niece!”

“You knew all that before, yet did not flinch from it,” he reminded her. “If it is hard now, do you fear to treat yourself with hardness? I have no fears for my niece.”

“I am afraid of injuring all of you,” she said doggedly.

“Of that we are the judges. You cannot know our customs. Well—it is in your hands.

Please inform me within an hour.”

He went again and left her alone to face his words and her own thoughts.

Now they marshaled themselves in an array of horror. Oh, these things which in her world passed so lightly! Where had they brought her—to her own ruin and that of the man she loved? Every avenue of escape shut. Her name the storm-center of all that is sensationally vile and hateful. Would her old friends spare her? Not one—man or woman. It would blow over, but the dank smell of it would hang about her forever and poison for herself every dawn of joy and sunset of peace.

And more. Ito—Ito. With the strength of her wicked will she had dragged him down from the mysterious heaven of their meetings to the cruel retributions of earth. Vainly he had entreated. He had known; she had known nothing and dared all, had bartered the substance for the shadow—had doomed him to share her shame and ruin. Such thoughts

cannot be told. All night they held her in a grip of fire and she bowed under them.

The first dewy beams were slanting through the eastward pines when Bridget came out. As she dropped wearily into a chair Yasoma spoke:

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“Will he live?”

“Praise God, yes, Miss Soma. At least there’s a good chance—but his spine’s hurt. I couldn’t know a word they said but I could see their meaning. And now, child, go to bed. Your eyes is like two burnt holes in a blanket.”

“To bed? No—to pack. We’re going away, Bridget. I brought this mischief on them and they must be rid of me.”

For a few minutes Bridget said nothing—she sat with her hands on her knees staring out in a muse through the pines to the far-away rift of sea. Finally:

“Well, it’s not for me to say, child, but it’s a queer thing to take all folk give you and run like a redshank the minute they’re in trouble. I wouldn’t have thought it of you, Miss Soma—and you that I’ve seen growing up like a young shoot out of all your nonsense since we come here! ’Tisn’t what Mrs. Ascham or the like of her would do.”

“They’ll hate me. They’ll never want to see me again. Bridgie. You don’t know. It was a man I knew in London that did it. He wanted to speak to me and Mr. Ito wouldn’t let him. Oh, Bridgie, I must go!”

It was as if the years had run back and she was pleading to Bridget for comfort and help as in the unloved childhood when that love was her only refuge. But Bridget did not respond as long ago. She sat stiffly erect, and her voice had a note that Yasoma remembered well.

“I don’t need to be told who it was, Miss Soma. That Maxwell. Didn’t I hate the sight of him about the house and the bad little eye

of him cocked to see what could he be raking in for himself? If you encouraged him up to this place—”

Yasoma blazed into brief fire.

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“Encourage him! I’d have died sooner. Oh, Bridgie—Bridgie—” Her voice sank into utter weariness. “If you could think that!”

Her very body wavered as if in collapse. Bridget ran to put her arms about her.

“No, my lamb, I’m sorry. Sure you wouldn’t—you couldn’t! But I tell you what, and you’ll be said by me if you’re wise. Stay with them awhile—they have a taste for you. And cable to Mrs. Ascham to come out a bit. That room next your own is the very place that’ll be to her mind. And stay here. Did Mr. Arima say anything to you?”

“He wanted me to stay—yes. But I can’t.”

It seemed a long time that Bridget spoke and Yasoma listened. At last she yielded. Who was she to set up her wishes or her wisdom

against any decent woman's? She said at last:

“Mr. Arima can decide. I know nothing.”

When he came out later to say Ito was still living—they were still hoping, she spoke composedly enough.

“Mrs. Conran thinks I should stay and you say so. I'll do what you decide. I'm not fit to decide for myself. But I think you should send me away.”

He said briefly: “Then it is settled. Please continue your life as usual. Now, please rest.”

She went obediently and lay down on the *futon*, staring wide-eyed at the glimmering window with its paper panes.

Chapter Twenty-three

The days and nights that came after stretched her on the rack of sleepless torture from which no help could lift her. A police search was organized far and near for Maxwell. Boats were searched, trains watched, every seaport was under strict surveillance.

Yasoma, with Arima and the British Consul beside her to protect her interests, was invited to give her statement to the police. Would she say why she had objected to see Mr. Maxwell if she had known him in England and what Ito sama's motive had been in protecting her from the intrusion? No one could guess the black background of misery as she answered with perfect self-control that Mr. Maxwell had long ceased to be a friend. He had wished

her to marry him, and she had refused. Ito sama, who was passing on his way from the monastery, had warned Mr. Maxwell that his visit was not welcome. He had persisted, and Ito had endeavored to prevent him by his skill in judo, and Maxwell had shot him. Nothing could be simpler and more natural, and yet to Yasoma in her misery it seemed that every word she uttered was a lie. But it was ended in half an hour, and she went back in agony to the loneliness of her room to wait for news of Ito that never came.

That interview would appear in the papers. It would be flashed to London, and she knew very well what the guesses and comments of her old gang in London would be. But that was nothing. It had blown away on a cyclone of emotion and left her drained, starved into almost senseless apathy—dead-white and quiet. For herself, let it be as it would. Why should she care? He would die. That blotted out all else. Time and the world stood still to wait; and afterwards—No, she could not think; she endured passively.

She heard nothing of him but a few stray drifts which reached Bridget now and again through the acolyte. It was evidently Arima's wish that nothing should be said, and Yasoma obeyed. Because it was his wish she went on with her work in the field, with jujutsu, and with Arimoto's class though it wearied her to death and the nights were as sleepless as the days. His mind was so full of Ito that he apparently forgot to think of her, and she had no complaint to make.

Naturally she saw Sayoko daily, but she too was silent, and when at last wrung with suspense she ventured a question, "Is Ito sama suffering?" the Japanese girl considered a moment and said gravely:

"Indeed, Soma sama, I know little, but, even if I did, Arima sama thinks it better to speak nothing as yet. Excuse it."

There was no more to be said. She missed Scott unspeakably. He would have known everything, told her everything, built bridges between her and the Japaneseness of the

Japanese. They meant all kindness, but no one understood her hunger and thirst, and there were moments when she was so near breaking that the world seemed peopled by ghosts who passed her with cold averted faces.

What rendered the search for Maxwell extremely difficult was the mountainous and wooded country about them—great, almost uninhabited, tracts unfitted for cultivation, where fierce mountain rivers hurrying from torn peaks barred the way. It was believed that no stranger unused to the country could make his way there, much less exist. It would mean starvation. If he had attempted it he must surrender sooner or later. No human eye had seen him since he fled from his murder, for such he must have believed it.

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Daily Yasoma passed Arima working in his garden, and all was as before. Occasionally he bowed, very often he was too absorbed even to notice her, and always when she returned from her work Bridget told her he

had been with Ito. But she never saw him there, and so two weeks went by, and the flush of autumn deepened exquisitely on the uplands. There had been little of the rainy season here this year, whatever there might be below, and the days were blue and calm.

But the strain was unendurable. She knew no rest, and human companionship stood afar off in the desert watching to see her die. It was her own fault. Sayoko and her mother never failed in kindness and affection. Arimoto and the others watched to anticipate a wish. None suspected. All pitied her. But yet they felt the isolation of her Englishness exactly as she felt the isolation of their race. Sayoko sighed to her mother:

“If Scott sama were here! He understands everyone.”

But he was gone far away. Therefore Yasoma never lingered now when her work was over but went straight back to sit in the garden, watching that window and thinking—
thinking.

She believed now that Ito might recover—surely they would tell her if he were dying—but that he would live only to be helplessly crippled. That terror haunted her day and night. It lamed her spiritual wings. She who had soared into the blue now sat huddled on earth, its prisoner. She made no effort of will for Ito—all power seemed to have been a fairy-tale, else how could it have ended like this? There was nothing more to be believed or hoped in the world or outside it. She felt her life here was closed, but she had none elsewhere and perhaps they would not drive her away. She could live somewhere near—see him at a distance, if no more.

Listlessly, she wondered sometimes why she should think so little of Maxwell. He never troubled her either with hate or suspense, and mattered nothing one way or another. He had come and gone, and two lives were changed forever as it might be by a lightning flash and yet he was nothing. It was her own work—not his nor any other's. But why a life like Ito's should be tangled in her debt who could

say? It blackened the justice of the universe.

Bridget and she were finishing a listless breakfast under the pines in the garden. It was full autumn now, and the last flowers grew about them in perfect loveliness among the rocks and pools. The purity of the air was almost too fine to breathe, like water bright and cold distilled from the ice of high mountain peaks. Thinking long and in silence Yasoma spoke at last:

“Bridgie, I’m never going back to London. I want to stay here. Could you bear it?”

Bridget looked up surprised.

“Why, Miss Soma, one place is as good as another when you come to my age, and I’d be very well content with what you liked. And I wasn’t overfond of London neither, the Lord knows! But whether a young girl like yourself that was so bound up in all your merry-go-rounds wouldn’t be hankering after them—”

“I wouldn’t!” Yasoma said slowly. “I’m through with them for good. Oh, Bridgie, if you knew how glad I was to get out of it all. I felt as if I were running for my life. And now—no use!”

Bridget’s gray eyebrows puckered distressfully.

“Didn’t I know it? Didn’t I know something went wrong? Only I wouldn’t say a word for fear it’d be the wrong one.”

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What had she divined? At first a shoot of fear ran through Yasoma’s heart. Love is a mighty magic and lovers’ love is not the only diviner. Next to Ito she would be more utterly humbled by the old woman’s knowledge than that of anyone else.

But Bridget added serenely—“Sure you got out of it clean and whole, and there’s many couldn’t say that much, God knows!”—and sent a new pang through Yasoma’s heart. Clean and whole! A few minutes passed

before she said:

“I’m going to write a letter that will cut off London forever. But I do want to know if you mind, Bridgie? I’ve been very selfish to you all my life and I don’t want to make you lonely and unhappy.”

“Is it not seeing London that’s going to make me lonely? God forgive you, Miss Soma, for a goose! Sure that’s not the way I’m made. ’Tis little do I care where it is, so long as I’m with you! More power to your elbow if you send them all flying! The nasty things!”

In five minutes she was alone. The quiet was startling about her. Not a leaf stirred, not a cricket chirped. A motionless sky looked down through the pine-boughs, and not a bird skimmed the blue surface. She looked at his window. The doctor passed her with a silent bow and went in. All was silent as a grave—as if no life lived behind it. Arima came up the track and by the bell, walking swiftly. He too vanished. He had not seen her, and she fell back into melancholy thought. There

would be no news for her—though all the rest of the world might know.

Oh, those talks . . . his voice . . . the strength and quiet of him like a rock-rooted pine taking storm and sunshine as means to growth. The certainty that no form of truth, however beloved, could hold him from the moment he divined a higher. His life in London, strong and clean among the lascivious laxity—all these things had the quality of white flame, burning unwavering in a place of noisome darkness. And yet, after all, it had been too strong for him. It had caught and broken him—and love itself had betrayed him to the merciless. She sat, staring at the ground and revolved it all for the millionth time—her mind grinding bitter grain for bitter bread mingled with blood and tears.

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The acolyte came out with a letter which Arima had brought with him. It was from Eleanor Ascham. She opened it languidly. It was more than possible that Eleanor's quick keen eyes would glance straight to the truth

when the news reached her. She had known enough of her companionship with Maxwell and of London life to guess the nature of Maxwell's claim. And that would be another friend lost! Well—what matter? In utter ruin who counts the lesser losses?

“I am certainly coming. I shall leave in a month, and that will mean two months and a half before we meet if you wish to see me at once. But I know that there must have been many changes which may decide you to wait. And, as I said before, I shall understand. I have an instinct—and my instincts seldom deceive me—that even greater change lies before you. Something that may turn all your life into what seems a new channel—but it will not be new. It will be what was inevitable, and you will see that it was best. I am very glad to think you are in Japan—for a reason which may seem strange. There, quite apart from the teachings of Zen, Nature has a most amazing influence upon the spirit. It is difficult either to describe or explain, but I really believe that the long worship and sympathy of the Japanese people have given

what I shall call the Earth Spirit a power of response that one gets nowhere else except in China. It cannot be in countries where Nature is forgotten in the hurry of life. In Japan they know how to be alone with Nature. Most of us believe what lies outside our little egoistic life to be mere background. But some day when you are sad, try this. Go out alone into one of the pine-forests near you. Take no food. Sit alone under a tree in the dim quiet and concentrate with all your strength on the belief that the earth has a consciousness as alive as your own; perhaps even very much more so. And if with a feeling like prayer you can get inside its circle, you will have a wonderful experience.

“Have you ever thought this about Nature—that the only influences to which she is moved are the heavenly ones of the other stars and planets? Well—read this which I quote from memory:

“To the stars and heavenly lights her whole mass reacts by most exquisite alternations

and still more exquisite vibratory responses. Her ocean reflects the lights of heaven as on a mighty mirror, her atmosphere reflects them like a monstrous lens, the clouds and snow-fields combine them into white, the woods and flowers disperse them into colors. There are sensibilities of which our senses are too coarse to take any note.'

"Yes—but we can share them. When you are sad try this and you will know what Japan can do for you. I firmly believe the interchanged consciousness of ages of a whole people's understanding will rise like waves in the air about you and float you into a marvelous understanding. I know, for I have tried."

She did not read the rest of the letter but turned her wearied mind to those words, as if they held some medicine for her ill. True, she had never been alone since the blow had struck her into this sick apathy which no human voice had power to break. Could it be that other voices hovered and spoke to deaf ears with some wild exquisite

rhythm of healing? She leaned her head on her hand and stared at the ground before her, bewildered. Arima came out, absorbed in thought, chilling; the air about him. She made no effort to attract his sympathy. Why should she? It was impossible to connect him with the idea of purposeful “uplift.” That was not Arima. If men came they came and if some crumbs fell from seemingly careless hands that was as much as they got. Life was to teach them—the life they had chosen for themselves. There were certain rules which any man could read as well as he, for they are to be had in all Zen books, and there was common effort in their banding together; and what did he give more? He did not give, but was, and his men did not take but either perceived or did not perceive something which was he and which he also saw.

Could it be that it matters nothing what one says or does, and everything what one is? But what did it all matter? She relapsed into thought and forgot his existence.

He was walking quickly down the garden

when suddenly he turned and came back as if he had forgotten something. He stood looking down upon her. She looked up startled and saw a new kindness in his face, which like sudden sunshine lay warm upon the snow that buried her heart. He spoke strange words. She could not understand the connection.

“When the Buddha’s friend and servant Ananda saw the great Sariputta coming from far off he cried out:

“‘Serene and pure and radiant is your face, Brother Sariputta. In what mood have you been today?’

“‘I have been alone in Concentration, and to me never once came the thought—‘*I am attaining it. I have got it. I have emerged from it.*’”

Arima said no more, and she sat as if an arrow had fled through the air and pierced her. So that was it. Like Malvolio she was sick of self-love, and he saw it and despised the petty self-pity and selfishness.

They must be tired enough of her moping dulness. They too loved Ito, but there had been neither sulking nor swooning over it. Perhaps that was Eleanor Ascham's meaning too. But what strength had she to drag herself out of the Slough of Despond?

Arima stood, waiting silently. At last she said:

“You despise me.—I deserve it. But I'm living in a blinding fog. I can see and hear nothing. Run some knife or something into me to shock me awake!”

“And how can you wake when you go on dreaming that ugly dream of 'me'? If you did what you call 'wrong,' why sit staring at a rotting corpse? Forget it and go on. Let the dead past bury it. Or rather, and more truly, believe it never existed. All this is a worse vice than opium-eating. The best thing you could do is to go up into the woods and ask them how they live. They know some things you miss. What? Does it not say in the Christian scripture—'Consider the lilies of

the field’? But who does it? Now go. I shall tell my honorable niece that you do not come today.”

He turned and went off quickly, but something in his step told her that Ito was better. The medical student who had been appointed to nurse him from the beginning came out and stood chatting cheerfully with the priest. Their voices were quiet and assured. The air was kinder—the sun shone. She went in.

“Bridgie dear, I’m going up to the woods for the day. No—don’t look so astonished. Mrs. Ascham wrote to say—‘Go,’ and Mr. Arima says, ‘Go,’ and I want to go and come back well. I’ve been very ill since it happened—not my body but my mind; and I want to be alone for a bit.”

Bridget looked at her thoughtfully.

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“Didn’t I know it? And I wouldn’t say a word for sure the Lord must take His own way and His own time. But don’t stop too long, my lamb. Don’t sit up there in the dark,

will you, now?"

"I don't know. Don't be frightened, Bridgie, anyhow. If I stay it's because I'm getting good from it. No, no biscuits—no nothing. I'm going to make a day's fast."

That too Bridget could approve as a thing within the experience of saints, and Yasoma set off, walking wearily up the two climbing miles that led towards the moors and then to the fringe of the great pine-forests, whose mysteries she had never sounded.

The way was empty. No human face or voice disturbed the air, and all was quiet. No breeze, no drifting clouds; quiet and unfathomable blue above.

She turned at a certain point and looked down upon the dark groups of trees surrounding the temple, then went on again with flagging steps. The quiet outside was as nothing compared with the inward tranquillity of the heart of the wood. The sound of her own steps upon the heaped pine-needles was

profanation, and she stilled them, walking slowly and with awe.

From two huge rocks leaning together, pitched there in some long forgotten convulsion of earthquake, a bright spring welled in throbbing light. Its music intensified the silence, as it flowed away on some happy unknown errand from the dark and grave shadow of the closely locked pines. Only little golden flecks of sunshine pierced the net of darkness. Suddenly a breathing breeze awoke a sound like the moving of a distant sea in the high roof of boughs. Sighing, they whispered and were silent.

She had come bareheaded and lying beside the spring she splashed a handful of its living crystal over her wearied brows and eyes, and bowing over it put her lips to the upward bubble—drinking the milk of Nature throbbing from Nature's hidden heart. Then lying on the heaped pine-needles she relaxed utterly, putting one hand behind her head and staring up into the green quiet faintly flecked with blue. Her right hand hung

listlessly in the water, and the cold everlasting flowing between her fingers spoke of the sad and ceaseless flux of life to an unknown and sorrowful ending.

At first it could not be otherwise than that her thoughts should go sorrowing through the dead past, strewing it with rue and the other bitter herbs of repentance. As soon restore the water pure to its source as her life to purity! She remembered the biting little rhyme Bridget used to quote in her childish days:

“No, my lamb. You can put back the clock but you can’t put back ‘now’ to ‘then’—

“‘And when you’ve tasted stolen honey
You can’t buy innocence for money.’

—And so you’ll find it.”

So she had found it. She made a sworn vow then to her own soul that never in this life should anyone come near enough to her to catch any breath of infection from her.

“It may be there and I not know it,” she thought. “Never until I reach Enlightenment and turn the searchlight of perfect truth and wisdom into my own heart shall I know that. We lie and wince and deceive ourselves, and all the time we may be spreading death about us as I have done. I shall give, but from a safe distance, until I know the meaning of myself and the dreadful harm I have done. I have murdered two men, and one—the man I love better than my soul.”

So wearied out, she lay and gradually as her eyes closed an inner sight opened that took account of other things than form and color. Yes, the air about these trees was fulfilled with their delights of storm and peace, sunshine and rain. Joy and sorrow moved them, beauty was their soul as it was hers. The same life trembled along their veins, and they lent pitying shadows to give her rest.

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“Now upon earth trail the long mists of
Spring.
Who knows but in the Valleys of the

Moon

The heavenly moon-tree puts her blossom
on?

The blossoms of her crown win back their
glory

It is the sign of Spring—”

“Rejoice in that!” Ito had said. “It is Japanese and Zen. Can words be lovelier?” She heard his voice now in the chant in which he read these words of Paradise.

“Not heaven is here but beauty of wind and
sky.

Blow, blow, O wind, and build
Cloud-walls across the air . . .

This flush of Springtime in the woods,

Snow on the mountain,

Moonlight on the clear shore—

Which is the fairest?”

Gradually her mind was enlarging or else something lovely and akin was expanding to make place for her—to receive her as when a bather steps into the shallow crystal cold of water and it envelops her feet, rising higher

and higher, girdling her limbs, her breasts,
with light and coolness; and her arms relax,
head droops aside, the gliding coolness sways
her feet and the translucent takes her to its
bosom, floating into rest, eternal rest.

“Waves lapping, wind in the pine trees
whispering.”

She knew no more. Was it sleep or a dream
beyond all joy of sleep?

“Now she is robed in a garment of Spring
mist.”

A garment of rest—the first rest she
had known since the world shattered to
pieces about her. She lay in the arms of
Nature, and it was good.

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“I am robed in the sky, in the empty blue
of heaven.”

Oh, rest unspeakable!—one with it, dipped in
the secret springs of loveliness, child of the
beloved earth and of the starry sky!

She lay and slept, and the day went past her,
melting from one beauty to another, and she
lay and knew in sleep the unworded speech of
trees and grass and the hope of water where it
glitters dancing to the sun or knows its peace
of fulfilment in long moonlight reaches. And
after—

“Frost with a gesture stays the waves that
dance,
And wandering loveliness. He leaves a
white
Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance,
A width, a shining peace under the night.”

Divinest rest held her and a dreamed union
with the very meaning of all the hieroglyph of
beauty. At long, long last she opened her
heavy lids slowly, faintly realizing the
shadows of the prison-house closing about
her once more, and so lay a moment in the
twilight of the senses. Presently awaking
came; with a shock she sprang to her feet.
The day had glided away to another
hemisphere, and dusk walked with hidden
eyes among the great cathedral pillars of the

pinetrees. Against one of them Arima leaned with folded arms his eyes fixed upon the ground. She stared at him for a moment in alarm. Why had he come?—Ito—Ito?

“You have found my temple. Well—you were welcome!” he said. “And you have drunk deep of rest. You needed it. You know now what we find when we go out to see the cherry trees put on their snow and the maples light their fires? Come. I did not wish that you should walk alone through the dark, though none would hurt you.”

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She thanked him and went for a while silently beside him. Then:

“Arima sama, I have rested as if I had died and been born again, and it was because what you call my ‘I’ and ‘My’ slipped away and was forgotten. Tell me how to live like that always. And tell me this. If I have no personality, how can it abolish itself? What is there to abolish?”

He smiled:

“Personality being non-existent can certainly do nothing to abolish itself. True. How wise we are! But if a blind man’s eyes are opened he sees, and if a free man believes he is in prison there are treatments to dispel false beliefs. That is what you have had here, and it has done more for you than you know. When the dragon painted on the wall has its eyes dotted in, it sees. It is no more a thing of paint and paper. The winds and rains are its willing servants and it rides the clouds. You had a taste of that today. Was it good?”

She was silent. He went on:

“You flowed out of yourself as the water flowed from the rock. And as what we call Nature has built no prison for itself you flowed into an ocean reflecting the Light. You were at One with it and with the All.”

Vision! Suddenly the meaning of Arima’s cryptic speech was clear and simple. A personality which exists only in fancy can certainly not be asked to do the miraculous and pull things into line, but suppose there

was a Self in one which could see if its eyes were not bandaged, and suppose there came a thunderbolt which wrenched the bandage off and left the blinded Loveliness within staring at the universe of which it was at the same time the whole and part—what would happen then? Arima went on exactly as if she had spoken:

“What would happen then, if one went further, is what the Buddha called 402 Enlightenment. It is really not safe to walk about this world in the dark. All sorts of ugly things nest in it. No doubt they will learn how to behave one day, but that may be a long way off and meanwhile they hurt you.”

She answered that sadly and aloud:

“And I hurt people. I must be an ugly thing too—for I see about as much as a bat.”

“I have certainly known more beautiful,” he said, but his voice was not harsh. He looked at the cheap silver watch strapped on his wrist. “We must walk quickly, for I have

much work to do and if undone there will be just that number of ugly things filling up the place I work in. Let us say—weeds.”

Chapter Twenty-four

A fortnight later a typhoon broke over Japan, sweeping her seas to fury and parts of her coast to ruin. The murderous work was done in darkness in shrieking tempests and rain driven before them like whips of steel, and a shuddering gray dawn crept in panic-stricken to count her dead. Suddenly, the passion of the storm subsided into deathly quiet. Its mighty wings had swept away to other lands as murderers flee to hiding, and there remained the emptiness of desolation with a soft ceaseless weeping of rain and the motionless flowers hanging heavy heads surcharged with tears.

Yasoma went out bareheaded into the garden, and change met her face to face. The great

bell had cracked its support and lay bruised on the way. Two ancient pines had fallen across a group of younger trees, and confusion and death had banished living beauty.

“Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang.”

She stood looking at them sadly, marveling what joy in the world of reality had hailed the dispelling of their dream of form and color, or was the Reality of them, a loveliness beyond all dreaming, lying hidden in the Universal Mind far behind all the movement of protons or electrons? Surely Love and Death are one, and the face of Death is Love’s when the last veil is raised.

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“Death is the great reservoir of Life. Everything comes from the darkness of Orcus—everything that is alive now and was once there.” Or, might it not be that this world of appearances is in truth the night of death, and we and our thoughts the sad dreams that move in them wearing the semblance of life?

Oh, to know—to reach certainty—to wake in the light with Ito and Arima, untroubled any longer by questions and speculations—at rest! Strange and most strange that to follow a path which insures the highest attainment in conduct should lead by direct inspiration to the understanding of space and therefore of the spirituality of the universe. Why must the space-sense be linked with the love of right and that with the entry into a new plane of consciousness? Why do all the mystics of all the faiths unite in the statement that it is so and cannot be otherwise?

Mystery and unfathomable to those who have not seen and known. Simple and inevitable to those who have. To both, a thing beyond human speech.

As she stood looking with melancholy wonder on that innocent death she saw Arima with the doctor coming quickly up the garden way. They were not talking. They did not delay an instant to look at the bell or the tangle of ruined trees but went straight into the priest's house. They had not even seen

her.

Her heart stood still—but no! Why not sudden improvement needing instant support? He had been ill so long now—so very long—that his weakness must be exhaustion. She understood the Japanese veil of smiling or grave silence so well that it was as easy to believe it might hide hope as anxiety.

And she must not delay. Since Arima had given her such human kindness she was doubly faithful in keeping all rules and especially those set down for herself. 405

Now, she went at her best speed up the hill to her lesson in jujutsu with Arimoto. He was in splendid form but unusually silent. Generally he was eager to speak as much English as possible in the intervals, but today the intervals were cut as short as possible and all he said was grave and urgent, relating wholly to the work before them and spoken in Japanese.

Finally:

“You are drawing very near to *kiaijutsu*—our spirit-swaying art. Of course you know that though it requires skill of body it is far more, and nothing really good can be done without a change to another plane of consciousness. Men who move only on the plane of ordinary consciousness can do nothing with it. It is really the yoga of India, but we being a more practical people have turned it to more practical purposes, such as our military arts. I dare not anticipate Arima sama, but I venture to ask what you see when I raise my right hand in the air? I promise to do nothing in the way of *saiminjutsu* [hypnotism]. In fact I know nothing of it. Look now—instantly!”

He threw his hand up, and Yasoma’s eyes following it as it passed his shoulder-level saw—nothing. She rubbed her eyes—the man was there, but his hand disappeared. Her “Nothing!” in a tone of amazement satisfied him.

“Condescend to watch again.”

He himself had disappeared. With her eyes

fixed on him, the door many yards away. Nothing remained. Emptiness. She gasped with a kind of terror, and his voice beside her said soothingly:

“No—no. It is good. It means that you at moments can realize the emptiness of form and get outside the conventional belief. Was I there or not there? Do you permit me to report this to Arima sama?”

He was standing beside her as usual, and it might have been hallucination but was not. How long the whole episode had lasted she could not guess. She asked and he answered that it was no appreciable time, and added:

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“In the last fortnight you have made a very great step upward in the inner knowledge which we use for ‘spirit-swaying.’ You should be very glad. Will you now excuse me. Arima sama is detained this morning, and I have work for him.” He bowed and ran off.

The unexpected mastery of Arimoto startled

her more than the acknowledged mastery of Ito and Arima. A young man who thought nothing of himself and yet—amazing! She went slowly up to the field. She understood the experiment from the scientific point of view, because if modern science is right in declaring that a table or a man's body are alike emptiness with invisible electric charges (so to speak) animating them, to gain the mystic sight and find nothing substantial is to get so much nearer to the truth that nothing substantial exists. But is a thing "there" or "not there"? How answer Arimoto's question? And where is "there" in a universe which consists only of states of consciousness and not of distance? Suddenly, as she went upward, a thrill of joy ran through her. If that is true the mind cannot be bound or controlled by any solidity, for solidity has no existence. Then there are no bars, and the Essential Mind which is man can be where it will.

She halted as if the realization had struck her motionless and leaning against the bole of a great pine flung her inmost self into the

problem, forgetting the sobbing rain. That was a part of *satori*. The man who had the higher consciousness would be no longer the fool of time and distance. Knowing there is no solidity in the body nor in any obstacle he could act on his knowledge. Had not the Buddha and the Christ and all the saints done as much—vanished from the eyes of ignorant men who believing in the limitations were of course imprisoned by them? She recalled a ridiculous experiment she had once seen—a white chalk line drawn on a slate and the beak of a hen held to it. Struggle at first, but in a few moments inability to stir; the bird held prisoner by a hypnotic illusion. And that was that—and people at large were little better off.

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A wave of thankfulness, of trembling gratitude that she had at least the chance to know the truth, even if she could not use it yet, almost overwhelmed her. What had Ito not done for her maimed consciousness, wandering in fantom fetters, seeing only the shadows of the prison-house? She might have stayed there all day, lost in drifting mists and

weeping rain, if the thought of Arima had not flashed across her mind. “While you dream weeds grow—and not only in the earth.” And surely he knew what he spoke of. Starting awake, she ran up the hill and into the field.

Sayoko was not there. Strange. She had never failed before, and why had she not sent a message by Arimoto? The men were working a field beyond, and two passed her at a little distance, probably going across the river for fuel. Always they talked as they went—the very sound of their voices and laughter was cheerfulness. It seemed that gladness lived in the hills, Sayoko had said, laughing. But today they went silently side by side. Well, no matter—she had work to do and she set at it. Dreaming was permitted, for while the body worked the mind could go free, and she dwelt on words that Arima had paraphrased from a great writer on Zen whose book he recommended all to read.

“Enlightenment is called ‘returning to your home,’ for its followers will declare—‘You have now found yourself. From the very

beginning nothing was kept from you. 408
It was always there.—But who can see
the landscape who walks with his eyes on the
ground?’” That train of thought suggested
Bridget’s beloved illustration from her book
of wisdom.

“But, surely to goodness, child, if you go on
scratching in the dirt like an old hen, with
your muck-rake and your eyes stuck on it,
how will you see the man holding a crown of
glory above your head all the time? ’Tis
God’s own mercy that he won’t get tired of
waiting anyhow, for he’ll need his own share
of patience!”

The same truth, and Bridget would have
sworn to the next proposition also. No
knowledge—no world-wisdom—is of any
use to you unless you achieve that self-hidden
knowledge. Borrowed feathers cannot grow.
Enlightenment is self-revelation.

“One flower with five petals is unfolded,
And the bearing of fruit will come by
itself.”

The flower of humanity with its five senses—the dropping petals and then the forming of the fruit within. Surely the time drew near for her. Surely, far off, the lights of home were shining through the mists and the fire kindled to welcome a very wearied wanderer? The causes of *satori* are in the mind, says the Buddha. The Kingdom of Heaven is within you, answers the Christ. No truth can contradict another. The faiths are one.

The morning fled on the wings of vision. Already the men had gone, and she had not noticed, and the rain had ceased and a dim silver sunset like a belated dawn was struggling with the clouds. She gathered her things and went quickly down the hill to the temple. Something in the quality of the day held her apart from Sayoko. She did not seek her.

Coming up the track she met Arima walking quickly. Then he had been again at the temple. Looking up he saw her and stepped, waiting until she came down to him. In his hand he held the first white

chrysanthemum of the season starred with rain like tears.

She said at once and without hesitation:

“I have a question to ask. Can beauty feed all spiritual hunger? Is it the living bread? Is that why from the beginning of the world men have struggled after it in low forms, then in higher? Is it Enlightenment?”

The question seemed the fruit of all her morning’s meditation. He answered as if neither hurried nor wishing for silence:

“Certainly. Beauty is the other name of truth. You were told this before, but now you realize it. All persons and things are beautiful when we see them rightly. But now I have something else to say. You will have no further trouble from the man who shot my friend. In a few days you will know this outwardly. He has made what amends he could. Be at ease. In him also was the seed of Light.”

Some solemnity in his tone conveyed a darkness of intuition to her mind which foreshadowed the truth, though dimly. Even in the immense relief which filled her, for none could look on him and doubt, she caught at another question as if all good must come together:

“Then will Ito sama live? Will he be lamed? I have been patient. I have not asked. Oh, tell me!”

Written words are tame, but if Arima looked at her face and trembling hands he must know from what deep springs of agony that question came.

“You see—I did it!” she said, and was speechless for a moment.

“That is true. A crime of ignorance, but ignorance can become knowledge, and to that end I offer you a harsh discipline. More patience. Go this evening to Ito sama; ask him and receive the answer from his own lips. Will you do this? I warn you it will be

painful, but you can endure it, though, 410
as I see, your body is wasted and
exhausted by the long grief of these weeks.
Can you obey me?"

"I cannot miss obeying you," she said. "And to think of seeing him—" She raised eyes drowned in tears to his face and dashing them away unashamed would have gone on but that he delayed her.

"I have watched you. You have experienced already the Mystic Wonder. The Vision drew you—you forsook all and followed it. Then the Wonder of Education. To that you have submitted patiently. The Wonder of Enlightenment is not far off."

He laid the white flower in her hand and had passed on before she recovered her senses sufficiently to grasp the full meaning of his words and to realize with love's own pang of helpless gratitude what she owed him. Could it be possible that she had thought him harsh and cold and careless? Where had she not failed? Yet there were words of praise even

for her! Thought broke under the weight, and in a tumult of passionate confused shame and joy she went into the room where Bridget had spread their little meal.

“Eat well, child. Sure you look like the ghost of a ghost!” she said. “And what reason have you? Mr. Arima went out with the doctor a while ago and he looked more cheerful than I’ve seen him since the trouble came on us. But sure you’re wringing-wet. Run in and change your feet and your dress, and I’ll keep the soup hot. ’Tis fine and good today!”

Yasoma obeyed in silence. The food warmed and strengthened her, and at Bridget’s entreaty she lay down and fell into a sleep untroubled by any dream of hope or fear.

It was evening when she woke and sat up with amazement to see twilight in the garden. The time had come. The long waiting was over.

“Bridgie, Mr. Arima said I might go in and see him. Do you think they’ll stop

me?”

“Not they, if he said it. They know better. Now, go in very quiet, child, for if he was asleep you wouldn’t wake him, and the look of him will keep you quiet till tomorrow.”

Wonderful—what did not Bridget know? Her understanding needed no words to enlighten it. Yasoma waited no longer. She took the white flower and crept on noiseless feet through the rain to the sliding panel that had shut away all light for so long. She stood, breathing quickly, and after an uncertain minute knocked very gently.

No answer. She saw a faint light in the priest’s room and the shadows of himself and the acolyte sitting together.

Silence. She had thought Ito himself might welcome her. Then a light step was heard, and the young acolyte came noiselessly from within and pushing back the sliding panel went on into the garden, passing her without a look. She stood alone—and in a voice that

was almost silence, said:

“Ito sama!”—There was no answer. She thought:

“They have meant that I should see him asleep. That will be easier at first for us both. How kind! I must creep in like a mouse—and wait.”

She crept softly through the open panel and looked. A screen veiled him from drafts. It was turned upside down, and the pattern was unintelligible. She thought:

“How careless! He will not like that when he wakes, but I can set it right.”

She did not know the custom of his country.

She advanced beyond the screen scarcely breathing. Yes, he was asleep. Then for one happy moment she might look at him with her heart in her eyes as she had never dared yet.

She thought:

“I love him so that it will be like a warm ray to waken him—like the dawn coming in at the window. It may mean nothing to him—he is so wise. But it’s there. How could it be wasted?”

She stood looking in silent joy. Asleep. He lay on the *futon* very still, black lashes dropped on cheeks marble-pale, black brows barring the pallor of his forehead, the face wasted to attenuation. The hands lay listlessly on either side as though they too had let fall their burdens, and given up the battle and surrendered to quiet. All was submerged in rest. She had a dim fancy that this peace filled the room like water and that he and she met in some crystal element of silence flowing overhead and sealing them away from life in a place of divine rest.

She thought:

“Could I dare to touch his hands? If he could waken then by degrees—but he must not be startled! That hurts. No—I must not. I must wait.”

She waited in mute hope and expectation. She had never seen death. She did not yet know in what Presence she stood.

Did the knowledge come slowly? Was it breathed to her from the set pale mouth? Suddenly with a bitter cry she started forward and fell on her knees beside him, shielding him with her body, covering him with her face and lips and wild kisses as though to keep him from the cold, to drag him from the icy solitude, shedding all her warmth and youth about him in an agony of desperate effort. She fought with death. It could not be. It was not. But the silence overwhelmed her hope, and at long last she dropped her head upon his shoulder—conquered. . . .

So they lay together, and outside the rain dropped softly in a measured beating from the eaves. No other sound disturbed them. The hours marched by, and how long she lay she never knew.

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Finally she drew a little apart and looked at him in a dumb anguish of surrender. Love

had cried out in vain to stay the hand of Death. All was taken now. Nothing left. Broken off short, ruthlessly, never to bear fruit, faded into a dead blossom of death, all the perfection of love that was rebuilding her life from its wasted foundations. Oh, cruelest irony! Why had it ever been? Why had a hope—a blind lost hope—awakened her only to be answered by that irrevocable Never? What had she not lost? She clung to him again and kissed him passionately, roughly, to drag some response out of the awful silence.

Yet death had given her more than life could ever have done in that wild embrace. She knew too well that life would have kept its cold distance between them, and even now it was only because it mattered no longer that she might have her will. Because to him it meant less than nothing.

Afterwards she sat frozen into quiet, staring at his face. There was no more to be done.

A horror of great desolation seized her at last.

Even if he could know he would not care now that she was there. She meant nothing to him. He had gone along the ways of light and had long since forgotten her. Her misery was no more to him now than the weeping of the rain outside. Yet, since it would not harm to touch him at all, she could do what she would.

She cut a heavy black lock from above his closed eyes and folding it hid it jealously in her little case. Then, opening the coverings she kissed his breast above the cold and silent heart and laid the white flower upon it drawing the coverings together to hide it. For the last time she knelt and pressed her face to his, sobbing dumbly, then rose and went into the dark garden.

The rain was still falling. The young acolyte stood watching for her in another doorway. Two strange men were coming through the trees. She went quickly on to her own door. The acolyte passed into the room of Ito and came out again and overtook her.

“This letter. You did not see. On the little table.”

She took it, her heart choking her throat, shattering against her sides as she read. She knew his writing. Then he had thought—had remembered.

Bridget came with a tray of food, her eyes red with crying.

“They told me. But sure he was a good man, and the likes of them is safe. But eat a bit now before you read yon letter. ’Tis hours since you tasted a morsel.”

“I must be alone; don’t disturb me. Don’t say a word.”

The look on her face was unneeded revelation to Bridget. She said nothing but, going away quickly, closed the door and sat down in the room outside trembling from head to foot, old and wearied with emotion. And still the rain dropped in measured tears outside.

But as for Yasoma—she sat in terrible expectation for a moment. Would it be a chilling farewell—a distant forgiveness for her shame which had caused his death? Some high spiritual exhortation so far away that she could no more reach it than to the sun shining in his strength? How could she ever have the courage to open and read? Some sudden movement of Bridget’s startled her into life out of that cold and dreadful suspense. She spread the letter out upon a chair and knelt before it. A small manuscript was in the envelope also. She put that aside.

“I write this to bring to you what I said so poorly in what is called life. Bit by bit—so that you shall read it when I can speak to you no more in the way you knew. But we shall meet now in power, and what plane can there be in which I shall not call 415 and you come? Therefore, have courage, and above all, if you love me (and I shall know), do not think—do not reproach yourself that what is called death came as it did. It has given you to me forever. I did not recognize you or know

you for mine until I read in your inmost heart your grief and victory. Then I knew that we were one. We can never evade one another. Yet there was another knowledge.

“For our love there could be no earthly close. We have both outgrown that poor shadow of union. What have we to do with small dreamed joys and the barrier of the flesh between us? the eyes that blind love, the ears that deafen his music? Looking along the past as far as I am able I know we have loved each other in many lives, growing steadily together to this goal. One day, I shall make you know wonders. But never, in any life, have you lain in my arms as a wife. And why? Because, though we did not know it, the Good was withheld that we might find the Best.

“Now I have this to say. I who have known *satori* know that for me there is no rebirth. The weary round is over. I behold the Clear Light which burns away all earthly illusion. But you are no illusion. You are Life and Light as I, and because there is no

plane where you can end or I begin I
summon you to the knowledge of the
Formless, the Desireless, the Utterly
Desirable in which is neither change nor
division. Great things lie before you. Take
them as your own and the gift of Love
changeless and eternal.

“Let me write what I think best for you, for
the love of you is in every dying pulse-
beat. But what I write is little; you shall
know more later in ways that leave words
behind.

“Stay here until the light finds you, for it
will find you. Then return to your own
country. That is your law of life; 416
give it obedience. Gladden your life
with great things—above all with the
guardianship of children. Give them your
laughter and scorn and courage and
endurance. You have seen a great thing.
Pass it on through your every deed.

“And remember this: Now I am set free we
can meet as never before. Would you drag

me back to flow through the old dry channels of the senses if you could? Taste and see! Neither time nor distance exists! There is only Mind. How could I go who never came, or you lose me who are in my innermost as I in yours? But there is the earthly dream in which for a time you must walk difficultly, and for that I say this— Come to me always in sleep. You will know by the deep rest when you wake and you will dream, and such dreams are vision. But day and night I am with you. I am the *yugen* in all beauty, the ecstasy in all delight.

“Little by little I have written this to bear witness that all is Love, and we have outsoared the fantoms of time, distance, and division. Night and day are ours, and the sun and moon our slaves. I loved you. I shall love you, and in this is said eternity.”

His name stood at the end written more strongly than the rest in Japanese fashion.

“ITO YASUJIRO.”

She threw herself face downward on the floor and lay in a torment of which she could not tell whether it were spiritual or earthly. Agony and rending birth-pangs of the soul struggling with death for freedom. Time went by. A pale tear-drowned shaft of sunlight stole in at the window. It fell upon her hand lying beside her. She saw it—and beheld a marvel.

It seemed as though a sudden blaze fell upon her, dissolving the whole substance of her body into light—light unbearable. Memory—but of what she could not tell—Memory and certain knowledge rushed upon her: 417 dead hopes, living loves and joys, lives behind lives unfolded for one dread moment, the perfection of conscious Law in the universe working serenely to its goal—and pervading it all, the very light of Love. Instinctively she hid her face in her arms and crouched against the ground to hide from the intolerable light. It relaxed, and a sea of peace rose about her. All doubts and hesitations gone, the essence of the Mind satisfied, the Indescribable realized alike in the vastness of

the universe and the dissolution of all individuality. Blinded, helpless, but sustained by Power, hidden, hiding from excess of Light—she saw and was one with what she beheld.

Afterwards when she spoke of this experience to the only two people to whom it was possible she should speak of it she could say little more than that it had destroyed her old life as with fire and given her a new one. “Behold, I make all things new!” This is the new birth. The former things had passed away. She could wander free and where she would. She could act with safety and power in the rhythm of Law.

“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.

It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing:

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For in the wilderness shall waters break out

and streams in the desert.

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And sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

So her night had passed. His hand held her, his eyes laughed mysteries into hers. She rose and washed the dry tear-stains from her face.

Taking the lock of Ito's black hair she clasped it into a pendant beneath a great ruby which had been made to hold her 418 mother's portrait though she had never brought herself to hide it beneath that heart of fire. She slung it on a chain and hid it in her bosom. Then, guided by a true instinct, she went out to meet Arima. She saw him a long way off and quickened her steps.

He was coming down the hill, his head bowed as if in thought, and at first he did not hear her coming. Suddenly he heard and stood still. She also—and thus they looked into each other's souls. The strangest silent meeting. Presently he smiled, she also. They walked side by side down the hill and neither

spoke, yet it seemed that all necessary things had been said between them. At last, looking at her, he spoke:

“When water is held in the hands the moon is reflected in it. When flowers are handled the scent suffuses the robe.”

She smiled again and did not answer.

As they turned in at the way leading to the temple he asked a question: “Have you thought me cruel to send you in unprepared?”

She answered: “How could I think you cruel? I understand all things now. I have forgotten my griefs. You did what was best always. I thank you in his name and mine.”

Arima said briefly, “You have seen into your own nature; you have it!”—and led the way into the room of Ito, beckoning her to follow. Together they stood in the silence of comprehension looking down upon the vanishing beauty which both loved so truly, dwelling not upon it but upon the eternity of

beauty and bliss it symbolized.

Presently she went out to find Bridget, leaving Arima alone. With tear-reddened eyes she sat dutifully stitching at the lessening pile of poor garments, and looked up anxiously as Yasoma came in and pulled a cushion beside her. The thought in Bridget's astonished mind was that she had never seen her so 419 happy and beautiful, and how could that be if she loved him? Yasoma took her thin old hand and pressed it against her cheek.

“I won't tell you my heart, Bridgie, and I needn't, for you know it. Don't talk of it. But what I want to say is this: in a short while we're going back to England.”

She felt the shudder in Bridget's cold hand and answered quickly:

“No—not to the old ways of living! Never that. But—Tell me, Bridgie, do you like children well enough for us to take care of a few if I wanted to? I had an awful time as a

child—you remember? And I thought—Well, we'll see in a while!"

"Oh, Miss Soma, 'tis a fine thought but you'd hate it when all the old jokers come round you again in London. Think a bit first."

"I didn't say London. Yes, I'll think and with Mrs. Ascham. But I believe that will be it. Shall you mind?"

"Mind is it? Me? Never. But—" She stopped and they sat silently as sunbeams dispersed the mists and lit up all the colors in the garden. Later and with full understanding she sat in the sunshine to read Ito's story written for her and for her only. Its first and last word was "Love."

Two days later she went up the hill to resume her work and Arima met her at the garden gate with a letter in his hands.

"It is to me," he said, "but it concerns you. A friend at Kobe has written. News has come to Kobe by wireless that the ship Lady

Doverdale has reported that on hearing from our police they suspected that the man was on board under the name of Startin. The captain questioned him, and he admitted that he was Maxwell. He was told to consider himself under arrest in his cabin until the ship reached Colombo. To this he agreed quite calmly, but when food was taken to him in the morning he had disappeared. It appears to be certain that he threw himself overboard. Therefore that ends. Ito sama would think this best, since he had not the courage to live. He will do better next time and your power will help him. He also was of the children of Light, and his time awaits him. And I hear from Scott sama and he desires you and Mrs. Ascham should visit him in India. Take this paper and use it when you will.”

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He turned away without waiting for an answer. That night she began the rule of disciplined power of which Asia has known the secret for untold ages. She opened the paper given her by Arima and read:

Meditate thus: taking the posture of composure according to our rule.

“I am the Cosmic Wisdom, as the sun shines in his strength. All wisdom is mine. I am its unit. It flows through me. May my consciousness be absorbed in the Highest Consciousness that I may manifest upon the world in wisdom.

“I am the Cosmic Joy, the rush of the *akasha* on its way, the mystic dance. I am joy. May my consciousness be absorbed in the Highest Consciousness that I may manifest in joy upon the world.

“I am the Cosmic Beauty. The eternal loveliness shines in my body, mind and That which is within. May my consciousness be absorbed into the Mightiest Consciousness that I may manifest in Beauty upon the world.

“I am the Cosmic Power made manifest in all life, divine and human, animal and plant. May my consciousness be absorbed

into the Higher Consciousness that I may manifest in Power upon the world.”

Wonder encompassed her—the wonder 421
of the past, the wonder of the future
breaking upon her in one. Her feet quickened
to tread the onward way.

The night had come. She laid the world aside
and stepped over the borderland of Sleep into
the waiting arms of Love.

THE END.

Footnotes

[1] China.

[2] Litter.

Transcriber's Notes

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[The end of *The Garden of Vision* by Elizabeth Louisa Moresby (as L. Adams Beck)]