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## Snake and Hawk

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cooked and ate the ears. Spirit of mercy, what happiness!

After which feat, our trumpeter played "Fortune Our Foe" again, and Iloa—that was her name, Iloa—danced for us, a dance like the shifting of leaves on a summer tree.

And when George Marshall had no more breath to blow in his trumpet, she came over suddenly and knelt at Sir Roger's feet and touched her forehead with his hand. I have never seen a thing fairer than that gesture—

not even May morning. He raised her at once, flushing deep, for his manhood had come back to him with food and drink. And as he raised her, a charm that was hung around her neck on a twist of cord swung forward and sparkled in the sun. He took it up in his hand most courteously and looked at it illy enough, and then a sort of soundless slock went over him and he bristled at once like a hound that has seen a ghost.

"KING PHILIP, his head," he said in English very bitterly. And it was a Spanish gold piece.

Then they began talking swiftly together in Spanish, but too low for me to hear. Only it seemed from his face as if she were telling her story, as a child tells the tale of some unparadiseable wrong it has seen, but never comprehended, quite innocently, with no slightest accent except wonder.

I crept closer, meanly enough; but if Sir Roger saw me, he did not check me.

So, at the end, I knew the name of the Spaniard who thus had dealt with her—Don Sebastian Dominic Alcara—duke and viceroy, despoiler of the helpless! A brave, cruel man!

"And so I fled back to my city, but all my people are dead," she ended.

Sir Roger said nothing; he only sat there musing; and the carved stone faces that grinned on the ruins about us had more pity and life than his.

After a while she looked at him shyly and put her hand up to be comforted. "I have great fear," she said. "They will seek me because I am all that is left of my nation and know of the gold."

Sir Roger must have heard her, but he did not answer directly. "Was he scarred in the hand, this man? In the right hand?" he said instead, and his voice was colder than the fog of the sea.

She nodded. "Scarred. A face like a mountain hawk's," she said; and the wonder, the dreadful wonder of a child that has been tormented for no reason came back to her eyes again.

"That wound is from me," said Sir Roger very simply. "That is twice we have crossed. There will be a third time, Iloa." Then he would have risen and gone to walk by himself alone, for the battle madness was upon him, as I could see.

But she clung to him passionately and would not let him go. "I will show you where the gold is, the gold of Manoa," she cried out frightenedly. "For I am the last of my people, and you hate Spaniards. And I love you," she added, directly as a ten-year maid.

"This time our whole company heard what she said, for she spoke in broken Spanish, and they got to their feet. And the next thing I remember is my own voice, shaky and harsh, crying out in a cloud of other voices: "The gold! The gold, Sir Roger! Show us the gold!"

IT WAS a long path that she led us on, through many devious passages and cunning doors till it seemed at one time as if we were sinking into the very bowels of the earth, but not one of all those skeletons that had lain so deathly beside the pillars of the temple that morning did aught but cry to each other to make haste. At the end we came to the first of three great chambers under the earth, each as long as the hall of a king's palace. It was there, like a hive that years upon years

have crowded to the uttermost bounds with pure honey. It was there, all our precious gold.

We were three days taking out even what gold and gems we could load on ourselves and our beasts, the treasure of three queens'

pardons. I have seen a man weep because he could not hoist on his back a golden god that dwarfed him. There were the coins of empires so old no man alive had ever heard of them, gold goblets bigger than

punch bowls, gold statues of such pure metal a nail could scratch them like cheese.

I mind a great ring, bloody with rubies, that Sir Roger put on Iloa's thumb one day when we talked and jested, for it was too wide for any of her fingers.

"THAT is for your court dress," he said with his boy's graciousness, "your court dress in England, Iloa, when we go home."

After we had got all the gold that we could carry, we stayed in Manoa near three weeks to recruit our strength, for Iloa showed us Indian devices of trapping animals and what plants were good for victual and had no poison.

And through those weeks Sir Roger and Iloa grew together like threads a cunning weaver twists with his thumb. Only not then nor afterwards, except perhaps at the very last, was there anything of the hot love of man and woman in their companionship, but for him the sorrowful tenderness and kind gayety a man may feel for a maid not grown that has suffered great evil unknowingly, and for her a worship such as is best given God, the religious believe. I had never seen him so thoughtful courteous with any court lady. And for her, she was joyous as leaves in summer that cannot remember old winter or his aches at all.

At the end we marched, and the torment through which we should have to pass before we came to the Serpent again, where she lay well hid in a secret cove of the river, seemed little as blowing dust to us, for it was a torment we knew. Moreover, Iloa was with us, who knew the Indian paths and the springs and many means of victual we had passed by blindly, and always we had our gold.

We were merry when we made camp two days from the river, merry and young at heart. We were men again, not skeletons. We had come to a landmark, a black and shaking quag around which we had toiled for eight hours, marching to Manoa; but Iloa could show us a path to skirt through it in four. So we camped with the jungle on one side and a neck of the quag on another while the body of it lay before us, between us and the river. It was ghostly to look at, that quag, in the glow of late afternoon, for the stuff in it breathed from time to time like an uneasy sleeper and stones and sticks that we threw to it, it gulped in a breath and never gave back. But for all that we were merry, ay, merry enough.

Iloa had promised us the fruit of a certain tree prepared after the Indian fashion. So, when we had halted for the day, she went off alone, slipping like a fox through the unpatented jungle where we could not set foot without blundering. And the search took her far, it seemed, for it was near sunset when she returned, and Sir Roger was pulling his beard.

She came running into the camp like a slim, frightened animal and threw herself at Sir Roger's feet as if she had been wounded to the death. When he raised her her face had no happiness any more, only blind, white fear.

"Spaniards!" she called to him. "Spaniards! An army of Spaniards!" There was no time at all for parley, no time at all. When Sir Roger had quieted her a little, she told what she had seen, and we all looked at one another desperately.



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