

“Be sure he would. I could not be so treacherous.”

“Give me the four centimes and await me here,” said the old man.

Now, when Kokua stood alone in the street, her spirit died. The wind roared in the trees, and it seemed to her the rushing of the flames of hell; the shadows tossed in the light of the street lamp, and they seemed to her the snatching hands of evil ones. If she had had the strength, she must have run away, and if she had had the breath, she must have screamed aloud; in truth, she could do neither, and stood and trembled in the avenue, like an affrighted child.

Then she saw the old man returning, and he had the bottle in his hand.

“I have done your bidding,” said he. “I left your husband weeping like a child; tonight he will sleep easy.”

“Before you give it me,” Kokua panted, “take the good with the evil; ask to be delivered from your cough.”

“I am an old man,” replied the other, “and too near the gate of the grave to take a favour from the devil. Why do you not take the bottle? Do you hesitate?”

“Not hesitate!” cried Kokua. “I am only weak. It is my hand resists; my flesh shrinks back from the accursed thing.”

The old man looked upon Kokua kindly. “Poor child!” said he, “you fear; your soul misgives you. Well, let me keep it. I am old and can never more be happy in this world; and as for the next...”

“Give it me!” gasped Kokua. “There is your money. Do you think I am so base as that?”

“God bless you, child.”

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Depression fell upon their spirits. They would sit at night in their new house, after a day’s weariness, and not exchange one word, or the silence would be broken by Kokua bursting suddenly into sobs. Sometimes they would pray together; sometimes they would have the bottle out upon the floor and sit all evening watching how the shadow hovered in the midst. If either dozed off, it would be to wake and find the other silently weeping in the dark, or, perhaps, to wake alone, the other having fled from the house and the neighbourhood of the bottle, to pace under the bananas in the little garden, or to wander on the beach by moonlight.

One night it was so when Kokua awoke. Keawe was gone. She felt in the bed and his place was cold. A little moonlight filtered through the shutters and she could spy the bottle on the floor. Outside it blew high, the great trees of the avenue cried aloud, and the fallen leaves rattled in the veranda. In the midst of this Kokua was aware of another sound; whether of a beast or of a man she could scarce tell, but it was as sad as death, and cut her to the soul. Softly she arose, set the door ajar, and looked forth into the moonlit yard. There, under the bananas, lay Keawe his mouth in the dust, and as he lay he moaned.

“Heaven!” she thought, “how careless have I been – how weak! It is he, not I, that stands in this eternal peril; it was he, not I that took the curse. It was for my sake, and for the love of a creature of such poor help, that he now beholds so close to him the flames of hell – ay, and smells the smoke of it – lying there in the wind. Am I so dull of spirit that never till now have I surmised my duty? But now, I take up my soul in both the hands of my

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into a room, and took some water to calm himself.

“Yes,” said Keawe, “I am come to buy the bottle. What is the price now?”

At that word, the man let the glass slip through his fingers.

“The price,” he said, “the price! You do not know the price?”

“It is for that I am asking you.”

“It has dropped a great deal in value since your time, Mr. Keawe,” said the young man stammering.

“Well, I shall have the less to pay for it. How much did it cost you?”

“Two cents.”

“What?” cried Keawe, “two cents? Why then you can only sell it for one. And he who buys it...”

The words died upon Keawe’s tongue.

The young man fell upon his knees.

“For God’s sake buy it!” he cried. “You can have all my fortune in the bargain. I was mad when I bought it at that price. I had embezzled money at my store; I was lost else; I must have gone to jail.”

“Poor creature,” said Keawe, “you would risk your soul upon so desperate an adventure, and to avoid the proper punishment of your own disgrace; and you think I could hesitate with love in front of me? Give me the bottle, and the change which I make sure you have all ready. Here is a five-cent piece.”

Keawe’s fingers were no sooner clasped upon the stalk of the bottle than he breathed his wish to be a clean man. And, sure enough, when he returned to his hotel room and stripped himself before a glass, his flesh was whole like an infant’s. And here is the strange thing: he had no sooner seen this miracle, than his

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the change, and was only glad he had more hours to sit alone and brood upon his destiny. But one day, coming softly through the house, he heard the sound of a child sobbing.

“You do well to weep in this house, Kokua,” he said. “And yet I would give the head off my body that you (at least) should be happy.”

“Happy!” she cried. “Keawe, when you lived alone in your Bright House, you were the word of the island for a happy man; laughter and song were in your mouth, and your face was as bright as the sunrise. Then you wedded poor Kokua, and the good God knows what is amiss in her, but from that day you have not smiled!”

“Poor Kokua,” said Keawe. He sat down by her side and sought to take her hand; but that she plucked away.

“Kokua,” he said again. “I had thought all this while to spare you! Well, you shall know all. Then, at least, you will pity poor Keawe; then you will understand how much he loved you in the past that he dared hell for you, and how much he loves you still that he can yet call up a smile when he beholds you.”

With that, he told her all, even from the beginning.

“You have done this for me?” Kokua cried. “You gave your soul and think I will not die to save you in return?”

“Ah, my dear! you might die a hundred times and what difference would that make?” he sighed, “except to leave me lonely till the time comes of my damnation.”

“You know nothing,” said she. “I was educated in a school in Honolulu; I am no common girl. And I tell you, I shall save my lover. What is this you say about a cent? But all the world is not American. In England they have a piece they call a farthing,

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