

1.



WHEN KARO, son of Watanabe Iwai, was but ten years of age, and Yedo, daughter of Okazi Omi, a tiny girl of five, their fathers betrothed them to each other, for they had been great friends for many years, and it was the dearest wish of their lives to see their

children united in marriage. Okazi Omi and Watanabe Iwai were very wealthy men, and the latter was ambitious that his son should have an unusually good education, so when Karo was seventeen years old, he had left the public school of Kyoto and was attending the best school of Kyushu, where he was recognized as the cleverest student in his class. About this time, and when Karo was at home on his vacation, there came to Kyoto certain foreigners, who rented land of Watanabe Iwai, and became neighbors to him and Omi.

Watanabe Iwai had always taken a great deal of interest in these foreigners, many of whom he had met quite often while on business in Yokohama, so that he was very much pleased with his new tenants, who, in spite of their barbarous manners and dress, seemed good natured and friendly. Often in the evening he and Omi would walk through the valley to their neighbors' house, and listen attentively while they told of their home in a land called America, which they said was the greatest country in the world, although it was hard for them to understand how any place could be better than Japan. But after a time the strange men went away, though neither Iwai nor Omi forgot them, and very often they talked of them and of their foreign home. One day Iwai said to his friend,

"Omi, these strangers told us much of their strange land, and talked of the fine schools there where all manner of learning is taught. What say you that I do send my unworthy son, Karo, out to the far sea, so that he may see much of the

world, and also become a great scholar, when he shall return and crave thy noble daughter in marriage." Okazi Omi was fairly delighted with this proposal, and the two friends talked and planned and then sent for the lad.

Karo was a youth of extreme beauty. He was tall and slender; his face was pale and oval, with features as fine and delicate as a girl's. But it was not merely a beautiful face; there was something else in it, a certain impassiveness that rendered it almost startling in its wonderful inscrutableness. It was not expressionless, but unread-

not alter from its calm, grave expression, although he was unusually moved. He only said: "What of Yedo, my father?"

Iwai and Omi beamed on him.

"When you return from this America, then shall Yedo be given to you as a bride," said Okazi Omi.

"And when will that be?" asked Karo in a low voice.

"In five years, my son, and you shall have all manner of learning there, which cannot be acquired here in Kyoto or in Kyushu, and the manner of thy learning shall be different from that taught anywhere in Japan. Thou shalt have a foreign education, as well as what thou hast learned here in thy home. Thou must prepare at once, my son. I desire it."

Karo bowed gracefully and thanked his father, declaring it was the chief desire of his life to obey the will of his parents in all things.

Okazi Yedo was a very peculiar child. Unlike most Japanese maidens she was impetuous and wayward. Her mother had died when she was born, and she had never had any one to guide or

direct her, so that she had grown up in a careless, happy fashion, worshiped by her father's servants, but depending entirely upon Karo for all her small joys. Karo was her only companion and friend, and she believed blindly in him. She told him all her little troubles, and he in turn tried to teach her many things. He would reprove her when naughty, and endeavor to restrain her hasty temper, almost as her mother would have done.



That afternoon Yedo waited long for Karo to come, but the boy had gone out across the valley, and was wandering aimlessly among the hills trying to make up his mind to go to Yedo and tell her that in less than a week he must leave her for five long years. The next day a great storm broke over Kyoto, so that Yedo was unable to stir out or go to school, and she thought Karo would come, as he always did, but he came not, and she complained bitterly to her father. Then Okazi Omi, forgetting all else save the great future in store for his prospective son-in-law, told her all. And Yedo



DRAWN BY MARK HAYNE

"THAT AFTERNOON YEDO WAITED LONG FOR KARO TO COME"

able—the face of one of the noble blood of the Samurai—pale, refined and emotionless.

He bowed low and courteously when he entered, and said a few words of gentle greeting to Omi, in a clear, mellow voice that was very pleasing. Iwai's eyes sparkled with pride as he looked on his son. Unlike Karo, he was a very impulsive man, and without preparing the boy he hastened to tell him at once of their plans for his future. While his father was speaking, Karo's face did

listen, not as Karo had done, when they told him, with a quiet, calm face: her's was stormy and fearful, and she sprang to her father's side and caught his hands sharply in her little ones, crying out passionately: "No, no, my father, do not send Karo away."

Omi was shocked at this display of unmaidenly conduct and arose in a dignified fashion, ordering his daughter to leave him, and Yedo crept out too stunned to say more. About an hour after that

Karo came in and discovered her rolled into a very forlorn little heap with her head on a cushion and weeping her eyes out.

"You should not cry, Yedo;" he said, "you should rather smile, for see, I will come back a great scholar, and will tell you of all I have learned and seen of the people I have met." But at that Yedo pushed him from her and declared she wanted not to hear of those barbarians, and flashed her eyes wrathfully at him, whereat Karo hastened to assure her that not one of them could possibly be half so beautiful or sweet as his Yedo. She finally promised to be very brave, and the day Karo left she only wept when no one could see her.

And so Karo sailed for America and entered a great college called "Harvard." And little Yedo stayed in Japan, and because there was no Karo now to tell her thoughts to she grew very subdued and quiet, so that few would have recognized in her the merry, wayward little girl, who had followed Karo around like his very shadow. But Yedo never forgot Karo for one little moment, and each night, when every one else in the house was sound asleep, she would be awake thinking of him.

One day, a letter came, addressed to "Okazi Yedo, daughter of Okazi Omi." Yedo read this letter, first to her father then to herself, and she carried it with her wherever she went and read it over and over again until she knew it all by heart. Oh, how she would welcome his picture which he promised to send. It would almost be like having Karo back again. But although he wrote her many long, loving letters, three years slipped by before the portrait arrived. Now, the strangest thing about this picture was that it did not look a bit like Karo. The chief expression on the face was one of happiness; there was almost mischief lurking in the eyes, whereas Karo's face was grave and cold. The more Yedo looked at it, the less like Karo did it seem, but she finally decided that it was because of the foreign clothes. "He must have changed wonderfully," she thought, "but oh, how beautiful he is." And then she added, rather pathetically, "He has even grown to look like a barbarian," but she carried the picture around with her everywhere, and she looked at it a hundred times a day. The more she looked at it, the more she liked it. Yes, she even loved the new Karo better than the old. She was now fifteen years of age, when girls are romantic and fall easily in love. Perhaps she never was actually in love with Karo until she received the picture, and then she lost her whole heart.

Karo's first impression of America had changed a great deal, and although he admired much that he saw there, he could not be won from his allegiance and stanch admiration of his own native land. He was a great favorite at college, where he had made a number of friends. He had made great strides in his studies and was considered very clever. The students all liked him. He was gentle and unassuming. Sometimes he would speak of his beautiful home to his college friends, although Yedo's sacred name was never mentioned save to one, a young man named Howard Clifton, with whom he was on the most intimate terms. They roomed and studied together.

II.

It is not alone in Japan that children are betrothed to each other before they know the meaning of the words. Ever since Edith Astor could remember she had heard the subject of her future marriage to Howard Clifton discussed by her family and his. To Howard the prospect of marriage with Edith was very delightful. When Edith was sent to boarding school in Washington and Howard to Harvard they corresponded regularly with each other. Now, Edith had recently returned and Howard had delighted both the

mothers by losing his heart to her. What she thought of marriage with him it would be difficult to say. She listened patiently, perhaps a trifle wearily, when her parents talked of the matter, though she seldom ventured a remark, and with Howard she carefully avoided the subject altogether.

Edith was tall, with a figure magnificently formed. She had an abundance of soft brown hair, large and dreamy eyes and a beautiful complexion. When she spoke or laughed the rich color in her cheeks deepened to a bright scarlet and spread over her forehead and neck even to her little ears.

Edith saw life out of a pair of very thoughtful and rather sad eyes. She studied all whom she met, and it was no uncommon thing to see her eyes fixed long and seriously on some face while that strange wistful yet searching look crept into them, as though she knew you, and would feign have you otherwise. She was an idealist.

Since her return Howard had been continually speaking of his Japanese college chum, Mr. Watanabe Karo. One day he told Edith of Karo's little sweetheart in Japan, and of the flowery little love letters she wrote to him and of how sacred she seemed to him.

"He read some of her letters to me," he said laughing, "and she kept begging for his picture, until at last I lost patience and took a snap shot at him myself. I made an awful muddle of it, and as I thought little Yedo would be disappointed I slipped my own in the envelope instead, and Karo never noticed it. I wonder what her ladyship thinks of me, anyhow," and he chuckled with delight at his trick.

Edith flushed hotly. "I don't think that was either funny or clever," she said. "Have you told Mr. Watanabe?"

"Well, no," said Howard, a trifle uneasily; "you see he takes things so seriously."

Edith was becoming bored at hearing so much talk about Karo. She asked if he wore a queue. Howard laughed in derision.

"Do you imagine Karo looks anything like our Chinese laundrymen?" he asked, quizzically. "Well, you shall see," and the next time he came to see her he brought Karo with him, though it took a great deal of persuasion to induce that young man to abandon his studies even for a single night.

Edith began to study Karo just as she had studied all the other men she had met. But Karo was not an easy subject. Who could read Karo's thoughts or character when his face remained unmoved either by anger or pleasure? No one knew him—not even Howard. He was a Japanese gentleman, a Samourai, and he was too civilized to betray his heart, for to be able to conceal one's feelings is a mark of the highest refinement. And Edith was roused out of her indifference. He interested her as no one had ever done before. She was tired of the commonplace men she met every day who talked nothing but shop, politics and sentiment. Karo liked her also. She gave him little social points and talked naturally to him. He felt at home with her.

Whenever Howard came he brought Karo with him, for well he knew if Karo did not come Edith would be restless and unhappy for the rest of the evening, for she had eyes and ears for Karo only, so that poor Howard felt miserable and savage, although he found it hard to discover whether Karo cared anything about her or not.

One night he came into Karo's room. There was a strange look on his face, and his voice was husky.

"Karo, old boy," he said, "it's all up. I knew it would happen sooner or later. She never cared a red cent for me."

Karo was studying. He wheeled slowly around on his chair and looked at Howard in his usual calm way.

"Why?" was all he said.

"Well, you see," said Howard jerkily, "she—she met you."

Not a muscle quivered on Karo's face, and his voice was perfectly steady.

"You mistake," he replied, "she knows I am betrothed."

Then he got up and reached for his hat.

"I'll go and see her," he said quietly.

"Good God!" said Howard, as the door closed on Karo, but he did not try to prevent him.

A servant brought in his card to Edith, and Karo bowing low as he entered the room, stood slim and calm by her side.

"Will you tell me, Miss Astor, how you feel toward me?"

The words were slow and clear—startlingly clear.

The color flashed in a flame over the girl's face and brow. She did not answer. The man stood still and waited. Then she said, using precisely his words to her, "Will you tell me how you feel toward me?"

For one instant perhaps his lip quivered, and then—

"I with all my heart do honor you."

"Is that all?"

"I am betrothed," he said simply, "what more then could there be between you and me?"

"But you don't love her," she said, with a triumphant ring in her voice, "you don't love her. Oh, no, you don't. How could you. You were children then. One cannot love then. Is that not so? One cannot love in childhood."

"Whatever be so must be," he replied. "To a Japanese, the greatest virtue of all is—duty; duty to the parents, duty to the wife and duty to one's self in being true to one's self."

She came nearer to him; the flush deepening gloriously on her face, her eloquent eyes searching and beseeching his. "You don't deny it," she said desperately, "you don't deny that one cannot love in childhood. Then listen. I am not like other women. I cannot act as they do and keep back that which is in me, though that is what you Japanese do. I must speak out and tell to you my whole heart, for I know you do not love her. I know," and her voice sank to a whisper that was almost ecstatic with fluttering joy, "I feel tonight—I—perhaps—you—you love me—for I love you."

A sudden white pallor seemed to wither his face. He put his hands out, their long fingers tapering toward her seemed almost to speak.

"Honor, honor—to my friend Howard, who loves you, to myself, to you, to my father, my mother, my house, to—Yedo!"

It was an outburst of feeling at last. It was a cry, an appeal, a command, a prayer to her for help to save him from becoming an object of contempt; from being pointed out in Japan as the man who disobeyed the will of his parents, bought by the smile of a barbarian, who broke his betrothal vows, betrayed his friend and yet dared to live. But she only fancied she heard love reverberate in his voice, and she laughed joyously for she could not control herself. Then she heard the front door close on him and knew he was gone, but she only laughed again, for she told herself that Karo loved her, or he would not have feared her.

Karo had been gone about three hours. Howard smoked moodily on, and walked restlessly up and down the room. Once he wandered to the table and sank his head in his arms and groaned. After a while he heard Karo's foot on the stairs. It struck him that it was not quite so firm as usual. Then the door opened. Karo's face was ashy white, his hands were tremulous, he almost staggered. Howard poured him out a glass of wine, but he refused it.

"I shall leave tomorrow."

"For where?"

"Japan."

Howard asked him what Edith had said and Karo answered simply, "She does love me," with a slight emphasis and pause on the "love," then he added in a mechanical, passionless voice, "I love Yedo, of course."

All of a sudden he seemed to remember something. A silence had fallen between the two friends so that his words sounded startling to Howard.

"Are you going to kill me?" he asked.

"Good gracious, no," answered Howard.

"Well," said Karo softly, "if you were in Japan they would despise you. If the woman I was betrothed to loved you, I would kill you and her, too."

Howard shivered at the quiet words.

"Things aren't the same here, you know, Karo," he said.

Howard's aspect and hopeless voice were piteous. His face sank once more in his arms on the table, and a silence again fell between them; then Karo came softly to Howard's side, and his voice was soothing, like the voice of the Karo who had soothed little Yedo in Japan.

"Do not grieve," he said, "you shall come to my home for a time; my father and friends will make you happy, and when you return she will be kinder."

Howard reached out one of his hands and grasped Karo's.

"You're a brick, Karo. I'll go," he said brokenly; "there's not much left to live for, now she now she is lost to me."

"She will not be lost to thee," said Karo.

III.

Yedo sang all day. She sang almost wildly at times, and sometimes her voice broke down and she would sit on her cushion with her face in her hands and look at a picture on her knees and then pull out from her dress a piece of yellow paper and read it over and over, and then she would sing again. That yellow paper was a cablegram from Karo. He was coming and it was two months before the time they had expected him.

Then at last the day came. Yedo piled her hair up in a most fantastic manner, put little pins in it, tied the great obi, or sash, about her and waited impatiently. Twenty times did she go nervously to the door—then the little gate creaked and a tall young man came up the path. And little Yedo forgot she was a Japanese maiden; she threw propriety to the winds and acted in a most immodest manner and as would only have become one of the barbarian women of America, for she dashed to the door and raising his hands excitedly to her face, she caressed them wildly, saying only, "Karo, Karo, K-a-r-o!"

A strange look of awkward embarrassment had meanwhile come over Karo's face. He cleared

his throat. Then he spoke, but Yedo could not understand one word he said, for he spoke in a strange tongue, and she commenced to weep pitifully. Then seeing Karo did not return her advances she raised herself proudly.

"Watanabe Karo, you are changed in ways as in face!" she cried in scathing tones. She took pathetically his picture from her dress and put it into his hands, and turned as if to go, thinking Karo would relent. Her poor little heart was too full for further speech. For five long years had

him to enter the house. When Karo came into the room and bent low before Yedo, she did not rise from the little stool on which she sat until her father reproved her, and whispered, "Thou foolish child, wilt thou dishonor thy father?" Whereat she arose and welcomed Karo as she would have done an ordinary stranger or friend. And at the back of Karo stood Howard, and he was the image of the picture she had loved for two years. She had carried his face in her bosom, and had looked at it a hundred times a day till

she knew every feature by heart.

Howard lingered in Kyoto for some time. He was delighted with the country, the people, and their strange etiquette, and was charmed with the beauty of the landscape and the climate. It seemed such a peaceful happy land. Moreover, there was still a stronger reason which held him. It was Yedo.

But the time came when Howard must leave, and the day before his departure Karo said: "My friend goes tomorrow. He was betrothed to a lady in his country by their parents, but she knew not what honor meant—they know not there." Then he added sternly, "Thou knowest!"

Yedo raised her head.

"I love not you," she said, rising to her feet and lifting her soft round arms out of the great wings. "I love not you—the America—him I love!"

Karo went to Howard, who was packing his trunk.

"My betrothed loves you," he said, "as your betrothed did love me. As I did act by you, wilt thou by me? I cannot kill you as becometh my honor, for you are my guest, and the guest also of my father."

"If you wish to kill me, Karo," Howard said deliberately, "I'll send you my address when I have ceased to be your guest."

Karo answered gently, "I will not kill you, for you are acting as becomes a man of honor, in leaving our household, as I did leave yours in America."

Then Howard answered bitterly, "I don't know what your laws are. Your ideas of right and wrong are different from mine. If you do not love Yedo, she should be mine."

Karo smiled grimly, "I love Yedo with all my heart and you forget that I would disobey my parents, did I do what you desire."

"Well, of course, if you love Yedo that's different," answered Howard, "and yet it seems to me I wouldn't have cared had you taken Edith when



DRAWN BY JAMES MC CRACKEN

"ONE DAY HE TOLD EDITH OF KARO'S
LITTLE SWEETHEART IN JAPAN"

she did not love me, and I really loved her then."

"You say that now," said Karo coldly. "Would you have said the same then?"

"Yes, I would," said Howard doggedly.

Night was falling in Kyoto. Slowly, tenderly, the darkness swept away the exquisite rays of red and yellow that the departing sun had left behind it. The streets were deserted, and stillness reigned over the city. Two figures came softly along. They passed through the silent streets, crossed the valley till they came to the hills, and there they sat down to rest, for it had been a tiring journey to climb to the height they had reached. They were man and woman, and the woman rested against the man's breast and ever and anon he kissed her lips, the first kisses she had ever known. And scarce five rods behind them was a tall, slim figure, clad in a long, dark dress, with white headgear.

"My little Yedo, my darling!" said the man passionately, "I will take you away, dear, to where no one shall force you to do what you do not wish; where every one is free, and all will love you."

She shrank closer to him, and her frightened eyes seemed to peer into the darkness with an unknown fear.

"Why, Yedo," said the man. "do you fear anything in my arms?"

"Thou knowest not my people," she answered pitifully in broken English. "I fear not for me, but for your safety, for well do I love thee, my big America." The last words were intended to be playful, but her teeth were chattering and she shivered with dread, so that they sounded most piteous. Howard bent and kissed her lips.

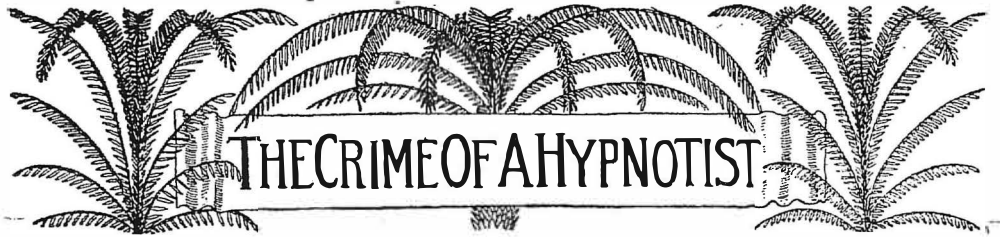
As they rose to their feet, from out of the shadow of the trees stepped Karo into the broad moonlight. In his hand he carried a long Japanese sword. A sickening fear came over Howard; not for himself, but for Yedo, who had with one gasp slipped to the ground and lay at his feet apparently in a swoon.

Then Karo spoke: "Scarcely one year ago, for your sake and for my honor, did I refuse the love of your betrothed. In my pity for you that she loved you not, I asked you to my home, gave you the hospitality of my poor house, fed you with the bread of friendship, and in return you have forgotten everything, and have seen with the eyes of desire and the heart of selfishness that which I and my father did prize most on earth, my betrothed, which you have stolen from him whom you called friend. Is such honor in thy country? In mine, did I and thee and she now live, my name would be everlastingly disgraced; the little boys would sing it on the street and point at me the finger of derision, for the gods will not be satisfied save with our lives. Therefore, 'tis better to die an honorable death than to live a dishonorable life. For the honor of my parents and my house and name, for the honor of Japan, I kill!"

Howard saw the deadly Japanese sword descend. One thrust only in a vital part, two little white hands upstretched, a sound between a sigh and a moan, and Yedo was dead. And then Howard recovered himself and sprang madly at Karo and tried to wrest the sword from him, but although he was much the larger and stronger of the two men, yet he was no match for the slim, quick Japanese. With one twist the American lay at his feet, and with one stroke he killed him.

Hastening home he first announced to Omi what he had done, and then went to his father's house. There he changed his dress, robing himself in the finest silk. He wrote a few letters, one to Edith Astor, in Boston. After that he aroused the house and announced what he had done, and in the presence of his parents killed himself.

The next day a great and honorable funeral was given to the three dead, and the people of Kyoto brought flowers to lay upon them, for they had loved wrongfully, but died to appease the gods.



By Alvah Milton Kerr

Copyright, 1897, by W. B. Conkey Company.



MUST act quickly, and without further mental parley, as one direction or one path seemed quite as likely as another to lead me from the forest. So I turned back, leading the now lagging and apparently discouraged horse. The light lingered for perhaps an hour longer, and I made an eager and determined effort to escape the wilderness of vines and trees, but they stretched on and on in blinding, baffling myriads.

At last the light waned; a deer fled before me and passed away like a shadow; a jungle cat wailed far off like a lost and crying child, and now and again an owl spread his wide wings and melted into the somber waste of tree-tops. I paused, conscious that my chance was lost. Paths seemed more frequent now, but I could no longer see them. I was deadly tired. My eyes had not been closed in sleep the previous night, and I had been racked with many and painful emotions. I felt drowsy, and sick of trouble and effort. Suddenly I saw a figure ahead of me, and, to my surprise and delight, recognized Uncle Joe. When I told him I had lost my way he laughed and said it was only necessary to follow the path and go straight ahead, which we did, and at length emerged into a road. After having received instructions from my guide to turn to the left, we moved along quite freely. The old man presently said:

"We're gwine up Mangro' Crick now, Marse Francis," he said. "In 'bout a mile we'll slam bang into Bruce Pearson's, den I libes 'bout a mile fudder on."

"All right, Uncle Joe. By the way, how are you getting on since you left father's place?"

"Oh, poo'ly, poo'ly, Marse Francis. De lan' w'at I'm on ain' much 'count, 'pears lak. An', by de way, Washington Biler, Lucy's sister's boy, fell in de crick dat night as we wuz comin' home an' cotch de worstest 'col' dat I eber see! I don' know w'at de matter wid 'im, 'pears like he boun' to choke to death."

"I will examine his throat when we reach your house. Maybe I can do something for him. Uncle Joe, were you present when my mother died?"

"Yes, Marse, I wuz dare." The old man's voice ended in a quaver.

I stopped the horse, and, laying my hand upon his arm, looked up to his face. Crude, black, full of frailties as he was, he loved my mother's memory and my heart went out to him hungrily.

"Tell me, did she die a natural death, Uncle Joe?" I said, chokingly.

"W'at yo' mean by dat, Marse Francis?" he asked, in a queer, scared tone.

"Did she die of sickness, Uncle Joe? Was she ill long?"

"No," he said slowly, "she went right sudden lak. She 'pear to grow so 'tob thin lak an' not eat much fo' while. But she nebber say she sick. She go roun' fo' long time lak she sleepin', wid her eyes wide open. Lucy an' me we mos' get 'feard ob 'er. One mawnin' Lucy she go in de Mistis' room an' she daid. But we los' all our fears ob 'er den she look so natchel lak; she look more natchel w'en she daid den she did w'en she walkin' roun' dem las' few weeks."

Synopsis of previous installments on page 30.

I could not speak for a little time, my heart was so wrung with the picture. "Was father present?" I said at last.

"Yes, Marse, he was done home durin' dai time. But 'peared lak he couldn' do nothing fo' de Mistis."

"Was any other physician called—any one beside my father?"

"No, Marse, she wuzn't sick 'nuff to hab a doctah. Doctah Dubette he come de day aftah she done gone, an' he 'sult wid Marse Stanwood, an' dey say she daid."

"How did father bear his loss, Uncle Joe?"

The old man hesitated a moment. "Well, he go roun' putty tolable white durin' dem days, but I nebber see him cry or tak on any. 'Pears lak he in a brown study mos' ob de time."

"Did he give any reason for sending you and the others away from the place?"

"Well, he say he t'ink he's gwine shet up de house an' go way fo' long time, an' he not need us any mo'. An' sho' 'nuff he did close de place an' go way, but tereckly he come back an' fotch wuckmen from New O'leans, or somewha, an', my king! but how dey tare dat ole house up an' mak it new agin! Dey jus' fairly mak it shine. Den Marse Stanwood—he go off an' aftah a month or more he come back wid de young Mistis an' put new han's to wuck all roun' an' sta't all ober 'gin. It hu't me an' Lucy putty bad to be sont off lak dat, an' hab dem trash young niggahs takin' de places wha' we been so long. 'Pears lak Ize been so't ob 'scouraged eber since, an' Lucy she dat cross an' pestern-lak I ken surecely libe wid 'er."

I said nothing; the whole proceeding was so extraordinary, and contained such abundance of food for painful reflection, that I forgot old Joe as we moved onward. At last, however, I heard him saying: "Dat's Bruce Pearson's house ober dar. I 'spects dey done gone to baid some time ergo. Yo' turn roun' de conah yere, Marse Francis, an' foller de little lane w'at runs pass' de o'chards, dat'eil bring yo' to de cabin putty soon."

I went forward like one in a dream, the bridle rein in my hand. The ground was open now, and the high moon shone down upon the scene, touching each exposed spathe and leaf, each dew-bent grass blade, and each grain of crystal in the sandy road, with the silvering point of its wizard pencil. I only felt this. I walked along the light buff streak which was the road with but little consciousness of time or place. Thought in me was turning and turning about my mother's death, and that dark event which followed it, with the helplessness of something fascinated by horror.

When we came to the cabin of the old couple, a guttering candle was sitting upon the door sill, and Aunt Lucy was sitting by it with the sick colored lad's head upon her spacious lap.

"Oh, my Gord, Washington Biler's dyiu'!" she moaned, rocking herself back and forth. "Oh, he's done gone sho'! He cayn't git he breff no longat! Oh, Lo'd! Oh, Lo'd!"

When we stood before her she looked up at me in amazement a moment; then, laying the boy's head on the threshold, she rushed into my arms.

"Oh, Marse Francis, is dis sho'ly yo'?" she sobbed. "De bressed Lo'd mus' ob sont yo', fo' Joseph he say yo' a doctah now, an' Washington Biler he mos' done gone!"

The black wife only replied with a grunt of