

HELENA GRAHAM,

THE BRIDE'S SACRIFICE.

CHAPTER V.

A young girl, beautiful as an angel, stood on an overhanging crag, with one round, white arm resting lightly on the rocks, singing to herself as she gazed on the sparkling waves.

Her figure was slight, but round and voluptuous, and there was passion and fervor, and wild enthusiasm in her look, as she stood like some stray seraph dropped from some stray cloud on that lonely island.

Herbert Clinton stood immovable, drinking in to intoxication the bewildering draught of her beauty. She was in every respect so totally different from Helena, that she seemed to him the more charming from force of contrast.

The young girl's song ceased, and turning, she leaped lightly as a young deer from her airy perch, without perceiving him who stood so intently regarding her.

Everything was forgotten now but the one intense desire of knowing who this radiant sea-nymph was. Turning, therefore, into the path she had just taken, he approached the cottage, and encountered Fritz at the door.

"Well, Master Freiburg, how are you?" said Herbert, carelessly.

"Sticking together," was Master Freiburg's concise and descriptive answer.

"Glad to hear it," said Herbert, repressing a strong inclination to laugh.

"Is Mrs. Ben within?"

"She was when I left the house," said Fritz, who seemed determined not to commit himself.

"Any one with her?" again inquired the young gentleman, looking as indifferent as possible.

"No, nobody," was the unexpected answer.

"What!" exclaimed Herbert, surprised.

"I thought I saw a young lady enter a moment ago."

"Oh, Jessie—she's nobody," said the gallant Mr. Freiburg.

"Jessie—Mrs. Ben's niece—I thought she was away!" exclaimed Herbert.

"So she was, but I went for her this morning. Couldn't be bothered doing her work and my own both any longer," said Fritz.

"I suppose I may go in?" said Herbert, feeling a sudden thrill of pleasure at the knowledge that this radiant girl was an inhabitant of the island.

"Yes, I suppose you may, if you like," said Fritz, in a tone of the utmost unconcern.

Thus kindly permitted, Herbert advanced and rapped at the door.

The door was opened by Mrs. Ben, whose surprise was only equalled by her delight at being honored by this unexpected visit.

Near the window that overlooked the lodge stood the golden-haired vision of the beach. She turned around with a quick shy glance, and blushed most enchantingly beneath the deep, dark eyes of the stranger.

"My niece, Jessie, Mr. Clinton," said Mrs. Ben, directing his attention to her with a wave of her hand; "she got back this mornin'."

"I always find it lonesome here without Jessie," said Mr. Clinton, seating himself; "but I have had the pleasure of seeing Miss Jessie before."

"Where?" asked Jessie, opening her blue eyes in wonder.

"Down on the beach, a few moments ago."

"Oh, yes!"

And again Jessie blushed vividly, as she recollected how she had been caught singing.

"Where's Miss Helena and Master Malcolm?" inquired Mrs. Ben.

"Miss Helena has gone to Glen's with the clergyman's family, and will not return for a week; and Captain Graham has gone to Strathmore, where his vessel is undergoing repairs. So I am left all alone, and came to pay my respects to you."

"Then you'll stay and spend the evening," said Mrs. Ben, smiling complacently.

Mr. Clinton professed his willingness, and the little widow, delighted at the concession, set about preparing tea instantly, assisted by Jessie, whose wild, shy glances were bent on his face whenever she fancied herself unobserved.

Half pleased, half afraid of him at first, she was reserved and timid; but as this wore off, he drew her into conversation, and to his surprise found her intelligent and well-educated.

This Mrs. Ben accounted for by saying she had gone to school for the last five years at Strathmore—residing there with the friend she had now been visiting.

The evening passed away with the rapidity of magic. Jessie, after much solicitation, consented to sing for him, and if anything were needed to fairly enchant him, that sweet, clear voice would have done it. Not once during the evening did he think of Helena. Her dark, resplendent face, and wild, fierce black eyes were forgotten for the golden locks and sweet, fair face of blue-eyed Jessie—this dainty island peri.

The hour for leaving came all too soon. As he rose reluctantly to go, he pressed the hand Jessie extended, to his lips with such passionate ardor that the blood flushed to her very temples, but not with displeasure. Ere he left, Mrs. Ben cordially invited him to visit her house while he remained on the island—an invitation he was not loth in accepting.

Jessie stood at the window, watching his tall, elegant form as he walked towards the castle in the bright, clear moonlight.

"Like him, cousin Jessie—don't you?" said Fritz, when he had gone.

But cousin Jessie turned away without reply, longing to lay her burning cheek on the pillow, and muse over the new and delicious joy that was thrilling her whole heart, and in her slumbers to be dreaming "love's young dream."

And Herbert Clinton, forgetting his vows, forgetting Helena, forgetting his honor, forgetting all but this lovely island maiden, sought his couch with but one name on his heart and lips—

"Jessie! Jessie!"

MANUFACTURER OF COCOA.—We will now give an account of the process adopted by Messrs. James Epps & Co., manufacturers of dietetic articles, at their works in the Estun Road, London.

See article in *Carroll's Household Guide*, p. 96-97.

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