

Here we held on, and consulted as to what we should do. Our Samoans said they thought it now seemed impossible to get out; we thought the same; we looked all about, but could see nothing of the canoe; we thought they must have got out, were anxious not to break faith with them, and encouraged each other to try once more. Again we struggled to effect our object, but it was all in vain—we were close upon the breakers, on the lee reef again, the case was perfectly hopeless; but dark and dismal as the prospect seemed to be to go back to the shore, we had no alternative. God's will was now unmistakeable; had he wished us to go to sea, he would not have thrown such difficulties in our way. We felt concerned about the canoe, however, we could do no more, and heading round, pulled slowly back to our deserted dwelling.

As we approached the beach we saw something black. "What is that ahead? the canoe is it? Yes, to be sure it is!" and presently we were on the shore, and talking with those who were in it. They too had struggled hard, but gave up in despair. They were afraid also of the heavy sea which seemed to be on outside; they thought the boat might stand it, but that they were likely to be swamped, and so they returned, and were waiting on anxiously to see whether we had to do the same. It was a great relief to us to meet again our companions in flight, and we felt all the more convinced that God was still leading us, however mysterious the way seemed to be.

We anchored our boat and canoe, so as to be ready at a moment's warning: got a light, and were again in our house without having been seen by a single native. It was now about three o'clock, a.m., and we were all faint and sick, and reeling, after such a struggle against wind, rain, and sea; we heaped our dripping clothes in a corner, and threw ourselves on our beds for an hour's rest, to prepare us for the fearful day just at hand.

After a few snatches of confused sleep, we were roused at dawn by the shouts of the natives mustering for battle. Presently our inclosure round the house was filled with them. They were now becoming lawless; hitherto they respected our fence, but now they talked about being our "soldiers," and thought they might do what they pleased. On going into the sitting-room I found it filled with some twenty of the leading chiefs of the district. I felt so faint that I could hardly stand or speak, Mr. Nisbet was not much better, but it was a council of war, and we must hear what they had to say.

It was the old subject: "We are few, the enemy is numerous; we are unable to keep them back; with the gun we think we could drive them off, and therefore wish you to join us." We had but one reply: "We have not come here to fight; we cannot join you, we cannot let you have the gun." We told them to wait a minute, went into the store-room, brought out a lot of hatchets, and put one into the hands of the principal men all round the room. Now we said "this is our plan: go with these to the ground where you expect to meet the enemy, hold them up, shout out that they are a present from us to them—a proof that we have no unkind feeling towards them, and implore them to receive our expression of regard, and give up the contest."

A number of them smacked their lips, and made their usual *click, click*, with the mouth shut, in admiration of the fine new hatchets, and seemed pleased with the proposal; but up got old blind-eyed Jaru, the orator and warrior of the district, and harangued them for a few minutes. The substance of his speech was, that they all lay down the hatchets, leave them under our care, first try again and fight for it, and in the event of conquering, get all those fine hatchets for themselves. Jaru swept all before him; every one laid down his hatchet on the table, and all were immediately on their feet following the old man out at the door, and off to the war. We went with them to the end of the fence, entreating them to do all they could to try and settle affairs without further bloodshed; they, on the other hand, kept urging us to let them have the gun, and went off grumbling dissatisfaction.

After breakfast we all united in prayer; Mr. Nisbet read and prayed, and I did the same. I had just said, *Amen*, when the back-door burst open, and in rushed the servants, breathless and excited, calling out, "the war has come! the