

The Galaxy.

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SISTER ST. LUKE.

THEY found her over there. "This is more than I expected," said Carrington as they landed—"seven pairs of Spanish eyes at once."

"Three pairs," answered Keith, fastening the statement to fact and the boat to a rock in his calm way; "and one if not two of the pairs are Minorcan."

The two friends crossed the broad white beach toward the little stone house of the light-keeper, who sat in the doorway, having spent the morning watching their sail cross over from Pelican reef, tacking lazily east and west—an event of more than enough importance in his isolated life to have kept him there, gazing and contented, all day. Behind the broad shoulders of swarthy Pedro stood a little figure clothed in black; and as the man lifted himself lazily at last and came down to meet them, and his wife stepped briskly forward, they saw that the third person was a nun—a large-eyed, fragile little creature, promptly introduced by Melvyna, the keeper's wife, as "Sister St. Luke." For the keeper's wife, in spite of her black eyes, was not a Minorcan at all; not even a southerner. Melvyna Sawyer was born in Vermont, and, by one of the strange chances of this vast, many-raced, motley country of ours, she had travelled south as nurse, and a very good, energetic nurse too, albeit somewhat sharp-voiced, to a delicate young wife, who had died in the sunny land, as so many of them die; the sun, with all his good will and with all his shining, not being able to undo in three months the work of long years of the snows and the bleak east winds of New England.

The lady dead, and her poor thin frame sent northward again to lie in the hillside churchyard by the side of bleak Puritan ancestors, Melvyna looked about her. She hated the lazy

tropical land, and had packed her calf-skin trunk to go, when Pedro Gonsalvez surprised her by proposing matrimony. At least that is what she wrote to her Aunt Clemanthy, away up in Vermont; and although Pedro may not have used the words, he at least meant the fact, for they were married two weeks later by a justice of the peace, whom Melvyna's sharp eyes had unearthed, she of course deeming the padre of the little parish and one or two attendant priests as so much dust to be trampled energetically under her shoes, Protestant and number six and a half double-soled mediums. The justice of the peace, a good natured old gentleman who had forgotten that he held the office at all, since there was no demand for justice and the peace was never broken in the small lazy village, married them as well as he could in a surprised sort of a way, and instead of receiving a fee gave one, which Melvyna, however, promptly rescued from the bridegroom's willing hand, and returned with the remark that there was no "call for alms" (pronounced as if it rhymed with hams), and that two shilling, or mebbe three, she guessed, would be about right for the job. This sum she deposited on the table, and then took leave, walking off with a quick, enterprising step, followed by her acquiescent and admiring bridegroom. He had remained acquiescent and admiring ever since, and now, as light-house keeper on Pelican island, he admired and acquiesced more than ever; while Melvyna kept the house in order, cooked his dinners, and tended his light, which, although only third class, shone and glittered under her daily care in the old square tower which was founded by the Spaniards, heightened by the English, and now finished and owned by the United States, whose light-house

board said to each other every now and then that really they must put a first-class Fresnal on Pelican island and a good substantial tower instead of that old-fashioned beacon. They did so a year or two later; and a hideous barber's pole it remains to the present day. But when Carrington and Keith landed there the square tower still stood in its gray old age, at the very edge of the ocean, so that high tides swept the step of the keeper's house. It was originally a lookout where the Spanish soldier stood and fired his culverin when a vessel came in sight outside the reef; then the British occupied the land, added a story, and placed an iron grating on the top, where their coastguardsman lighted a fire of pitch-pine knots that flared up against the sky, with the tidings, "A sail! a sail!" Finally the United States came into possession, ran up a third story, and put in a revolving light, one flash for the land and two for the sea, a proportion unnecessarily generous now to the land, since nothing came in any more, and everything went by, the little harbor being of no importance since the indigo culture had failed. But ships still sailed by on their way to the Queen of the Antilles, and to the far Windward and Leeward islands, and the old light went on revolving, presumably for their benefit. The tower, gray and crumbling, and the keeper's house, were surrounded by a high stone wall with angles and loopholes—a small but regularly planned defensive fortification built by the Spaniards; and odd enough it looked there on that peaceful island, where there was nothing to defend. But it bore itself stoutly nevertheless, this ancient little fortress, and kept a sharp lookout still over the ocean for the damnable Huguenot sail of two centuries before.

The sea had encroached greatly on Pelican island, and sooner or later it must sweep the keeper's house away; but now it was a not unpleasant sensation to hear the water wash

against the step—to sit at the narrow little windows and watch the sea roll up, roll up, nearer and nearer, coming all the way landless in long surges from the distant African coast only to never quite get at the foundations of that stubborn little dwelling, which held its own against them, and then triumphantly watched them roll back, roll back, departing inch by inch down the beach, until, behold! there was a magnificent parade-ground, broad enough for a thousand feet to tread—a floor more fresh and beautiful than the marble pavements of palaces. There were not a thousand feet to tread there, however; only six. For Melvyna had more than enough to do within the house, and Pedro never walked save across the island to the inlet once in two weeks or so, where he managed to row over to the village, and return with supplies, by taking two entire days for it, even Melvyna having given up the point, tacitly submitting to loitering she could not prevent, but recompensing herself by a general cleaning on those days of the entire premises, from the top of the lantern in the tower to the last step in front of the house.

You could not argue with Pedro. He only smiled back upon you as sweetly and as softly as molasses. Melvyna, endeavoring to urge him to energy, found herself in the position of an active ant wading through the downy recesses of a feather bed, which well represented his mind.

Pedro was six feet, two inches in height, and amiable as a dove. His wife sensibly accepted him as he was, and he had his two days in town—a very mild dissipation, however, since the Minorcans are too indolent to do anything more than smoke, lie in the sun, and eat salads heavily dressed in oil. They said, "The serene and august wife of our friend is well, we trust?" And, "The island—does it not remain lonely?" And then the salad was pressed upon him again. For they all considered Pedro a man of strange and varied experiences. Had

he not married a woman of wonder—of an energy unfathomable? And he lived with her alone in a light-house, on an island; alone, mind you, without a friend or relation near!

The six feet that walked over the beautiful beach of the southern ocean were those of Keith, Carrington, and Sister St. Luke.

"Now go, Miss Luke," Melvyna had said, waving her energetically away with the skimmer as she stood irresolute at the kitchen door. "'T will do you a power of good, and they're nice, quiet gentlemen who will see to you, and make things pleasant. Bless you, I know what they are. They ain't none of the miserable, good-for-nothing race about here! Your convent is fifty miles off, ain't it? And besides, you were brought over here half dead for me to cure up—now, warn't you?"

The Sister acknowledged that she was, and Melvyna went on.

"You see, things is different up north, and I understand 'em, but you don't. Now you jest go right along and hev a pleasant walk, and I'll hev a nice bowl of venison broth ready for you when you come back. Go right along now." The skimmer waved again, and the Sister went.

"Yes, she's taken the veil, and is a nun for good and all," explained Melvyna to her new guests the evening of their arrival, when the shy little Sister had retreated to her own room above. "They thought she was dying, and she was so long about it, and useless on their hands, that they sent her up here to the village for sea air, and to be red of her, I guess. 'T any rate, there she was in one of them crowded, dirty old houses, and so—I jest brought her over here. To tell the truth, gentlemen—the real bottom of it—my baby died last year—and— and Miss Luke she was so good I'll never forget it. I ain't a Catholic—fur from it; I hate 'em. But she seen us coming up from the boat with our little coffin, and she came out and brought flowers to lay on it, and fol-

lowed to the grave, feeble as she was; and she even put in her little black shawl, because the sand was wet—this miserable half-afloat land, you know—and I couldn't abear to see the coffin set down into it. And I said to myself then that I'd never hate a Catholic again, gentlemen. I don't love 'em yet, and don't know as I ever shall; but Miss Luke, she's different. Consumption? Well, I hardly know. She's a sight better than she was when she come. I'd like to make her well again, and, someway, I can't help a-trying to, for I was a nurse by trade once. But then what's the use? She'll only hev to go back to that old convent!" And Melvyna clashed her pans together in her vexation. "Is she a good Catholic, do you say? Heavens and earth, yes! She's *that* religious—my! I couldn't begin to tell! She believes every word of all that rubbish those old nuns have told her. She thinks it's beautiful to be the bride of heaven; and, as far as that goes, I don't know but she's right: 't ain't much the other kind is wuth," pursued Melvyna, with fine contempt for mankind in general. "As to freedom, they've as good as shoved her off their hands, haven't they? And I guess I can do as I like any way on my own island. There wasn't any man about their old convent, as I can learn, and so Miss Luke, she hain't been taught to run away from 'em like most nuns. Of course, if they knew, they would be sending over here after her; but they don't know, and them priests in the village are too fat and lazy to earn their salt, let alone caring what has become of her. I guess, if they think of her at all, they think that she died, and that they buried her in their crowded, sunken old graveyard. They're so slow and sleepy that they forget half the time who they're burying! But Miss Luke, she ought to go out in the air, and she is so afraid of everything that it don't do her no good to go alone. I haven't got the time to go; and so, if you will let her walk along

the beach with you once in a while, it will do her a sight of good, and give her an appetite—although what I want her to hev an appetite for I am sure I don't know; for ef she gets well, of course she'll go back to the convent. Want to go? *That* she does. She loves the place, and feels lost and strange anywhere else. She was taken there when she was a baby, and it is all the home she has. *She* doesn't know they wanted to be red of her, and she wouldn't believe it ef I was to tell her forty times. She loves them all dearly, and prays every day to go back there. Spanish? Yes, I suppose so; she don't know herself what she is exactly. She speaks English well though, don't she? Yes, Sister St. Luke is her name; and a heathenish name it is for a woman, in my opinion. *I* call her Miss Luke. Convert her? Couldn't any more convert her than you could convert a white gull, and make a land bird of him. It's his nature to ride on the water and be wet all the time. Towels couldn't dry him—not if you fetched a thousand!

"Our good hostess is a woman of discrimination, and sorely perplexed, therefore, over her *protégée*," said Keith, as the two young men sought their room, a loft under the peaked roof, which was to be their abode for some weeks, when they were not afloat. "As a nurse she feels a professional pride in curing, while as a Calvinist she would almost rather kill than cure, if her patient is to go back to the popish convent. But the little Sister looks very fragile. She will probably save trouble all round by fading away."

"She is about as faded now as a woman can be," answered Carrington.

The two friends, or rather companions, plunged into all the phases of the southern ocean with a broad, inhaling, expanding delight which only a superb natural or an exquisitely cultured physique can feel. George Carrington was a vigorous young Saxon, tall and broad to a remarkable degree,

feeling his life and strength in every vein and muscle. Each night he slept his eight hours dreamlessly, like a child, and each day he lived four hours in one, counting by the pallid hours of other men. Andrew Keith, on the other hand, represented the physique cultured and trained up to a high point by years of attention and care. He was a slight man, rather undersized, but his wiry strength was more than a match for Carrington's bulk, and his finely cut face, if you would but study it, stood out like a cameo by the side of a ruddy miniature painted in oils. The trouble is that but few people study cameos. He was older than his companion, and "One of those quiet fellows, you know," said the world. The two had never done or been anything remarkable in all their lives. Keith had a little money, and lived as he pleased, while Carrington, off now on a vacation, was junior member of a firm in which family influence had placed him. Both were city men.

"You absolutely do not know how to walk, señora," said Keith. "I will be doctor now, and you must obey me. Never mind the crabs, and never mind the jelly fish, but throw back your head and walk off briskly. Let the wind blow in your face, and try to stand more erect."

"You are doctor? They told me, could I but see one, well would I be," said the Sister. "At the convent we have only Sister Inez, with her small and old medicines."

"Yes, I think I may call myself doctor," answered Keith gravely. "What do you say, Carrington?"

"Knows no end, Miss, Miss—Miss Luke—I should say, Miss St. Luke. I am sure I do not know why I should stumble over it when St. John is a common enough name," answered Carrington, who generally did his thinking aloud.

"No end?" repeated the little Sister inquiringly. "But there is an end in this evil world to all things."

"Never mind what he says, seño-

ra," interrupted Keith, "but step out strongly and firmly, and throw back your head. There now, there are no crabs in sight, and the beach is hard as a floor. Try it with me: one, two; one, two."

So they treated her, partly as a child, partly as a gentle being of an inferior race. It was a new amusement, although rather a mild one, Carrington said, to instruct this unformed, timid mind, to open the blinded eyes, and train the ignorant ears to listen to the melodies of nature.

"Do you not hear? It is like the roll of a grand organ," said Keith as they sat on the doorstep one evening at sunset. The sky was dark; the wind had blown all day from the north to the south, and frightened the little Sister as she toiled at her lace work, made on a cushion in the Spanish fashion, her lips mechanically repeating prayers meanwhile; for never had they such winds at the inland convent, embowered in its orange trees. Now, as the deep, low roll of the waves sounded on the shore, Keith, who was listening to it with silent enjoyment, happened to look up and catch the pale, repressed nervousness of her face.

"Oh, not like an organ," she murmured. "This is a fearful sound; but an organ is sweet—soft and sweet. When Sister Teresa plays the evening hymn it is like the sighing of angels."

"But your organ is probably small, señora."

"We have not thought it small. It remains in our chapel, by the window of arches, and below we walk, at the hour of meditation, from the lime tree to the white rose bush, and back again, while the music sounds above. We have not thought it small, but large—yes, very large."

"Four feet long probably," said Carrington, who was smoking an evening pipe, now listening to the talk awhile, now watching the movements of two white heron who were promenading down the beach. "I saw the

one over in the village church. It was about as long as this step."

"Yes," said the Sister, surveying the step, "it is about as long as that. It is a very large organ."

"Walk with me down to the point," said Keith—"just once and back again."

The docile little Sister obeyed; she always did immediately whatever they told her to do.

"I want you to listen now; stand still and listen—listen to the sea," said Keith, when they had turned the point and stood alone on the shore. "Try to think only of the pure, deep, blue water, and count how regularly the sound rolls up in long, low chords, dying away and then growing louder, dying away and then growing louder, as regular as your own breath. Do you not hear it?"

"Yes," said the little Sister timidly.

"Keep time, then, with your hand, and let me see whether you catch the measure."

So the small brown hand, nerveless and slender, tried to mark and measure the roar of the great ocean surges, and at last succeeded, urged on by the alternate praises and rebukes of Keith, who watched with some interest a faint color rise in the pale, oval face, and an intent listening look come into the soft, unconscious eyes, as, for the first time, the mind caught the mighty rhythm of the sea. She listened, and listened, standing mute, with head slightly bent and parted lips.

"I want you to listen to it that way every day," said Keith, as he led the way back. "It has different voices: sometimes a fresh, joyous song, sometimes a faint, loving whisper; but always something. You will learn in time to love it, and then it will sing to you all day long."

"Not at the dear convent; there is no ocean there."

"You want to go back to the convent, I suppose?"

"Oh, could I go? Could I go?" said the Sister, not impatiently, but

with an intense yearning in her low voice. "Here, so lost, so strange am I, so wild is everything— But I must not murmur"; and she crossed her hands upon her breast and bowed her head.

The young men led a riotous life; they rioted with the ocean, with the winds, with the level island, with the sunshine and the racing clouds. They sailed over to the reef daily and plunged into the surf; they walked for miles along the beach, and ran races over its white floor; they hunted down the centre of the island, and brought back the little brown deer who lived in the low thicket on each side of the island's backbone. The island was twenty miles long, and a mile or two broad, with a central ridge of shell-formed rock about twenty feet in height, that seemed like an Appalachian chain on the level waste; below, in the little hollows on each side, spread a low tangled thicket, a few yards wide; and all the rest was barren sand, with moveable hills here and there—hills a few feet in height, blown up by the wind, and changed in a night. The only vegetation besides the thicket was a rope-like vine that crept over the sand, with few leaves far apart, and now and then a dull purple blossom, a solitary tenacious vine of the desert, satisfied with little, its growth slow, its life monotonous; yet try to tear it from the surface of the sand, where its barren length seems to lie loosely like an old brown rope thrown down at random, and behold, it resists you stubbornly. You find a mile or two of it on your hands, clinging and pulling as the strong ivy clings to a stone wall; a giant could not conquer it, this seemingly dull and half dead thing; and so you leave it there to creep on in its own way over the damp, shell-strewn waste. One day Carrington came home in great glory; he had found a salt marsh. "Something besides this sand, you know—a stretch of saw-grass away to the south, the very place for fat ducks.

And somebody has been there before us, too, for I saw the mast of a sail-boat some distance down, tipped up against the sky."

"That old boat is oun, I guess," said Melvyna. "She drifted down there one high tide, and Pedro he never would go for her. She was a mighty nice little boat, too, ef she *was* cranky."

Pedro smiled amiably back upon his spouse, and helped himself to another hemisphere of pie. He liked the pies, although she was obliged to make them, she said, of such outlandish things as figs, dried oranges, and pomegranates. "If you could only see a pumpkin, Pedro," she often remarked, shaking her head. Pedro shook his back in sympathy; but, in the mean time, found the pies very good as they were.

"Let us go down after the boat," said Carrington. "You have only that old tub over at the inlet. Pedro and you really need another boat" (Carrington always liked to imagine that he was a constant and profound help to the world at large). "Suppose anything should happen to the one you have." Pedro had not thought of that; he slowly put down his knife and fork to consider the subject.

"We will go this afternoon," said Keith, issuing his orders, "and you shall go with us, señora."

"And Pedro, too, to help you," said Melvyna. "I've always wanted that boat back, she was such a pretty little thing: one sail, you know, and decked over in front; you sat on the bottom. I'd like right well to go along myself; but I suppose I'd better stay at home and cook a nice supper for you."

Pedro thought so, decidedly.

When the February sun had stopped blazing down directly overhead, and a few white afternoon clouds had floated over from the east to shade his shining, so that man could bear it, the four started inland toward the backbone ridge, on whose summit there ran an old trail southward, made by

the fierce Creeks three centuries before. Right up into the dazzling light soared the great eagles—straight up, up to the sun; their unshrinking eyes fearlessly fixed full on his fiery ball.

"It would be grander if we did not know they had just stolen their dinners from the poor hungry fish-hawks over there on the inlet," said Carrington.

Sister St. Luke had learned to walk quite rapidly now. Her little black gown trailed lightly along the sand behind her, and she did her best to "step out boldly," as Keith directed; but it was not firmly, for she only succeeded in making a series of quick, uncertain little paces over the sand-like bird tracks. Once Keith had taken her back and made her look at her own uneven footsteps. "Look—no two the same distance apart," he said. The little Sister looked and was very much mortified. "Indeed, I *will* try with might to do better," she said. And she did try with might; they saw her counting noiselessly to herself as she walked, "One, two; one, two." But she had improved so much that Keith now devoted his energies to teaching her to throw back her head, and look about her. "Do you not see those soft banks of clouds piled up in the west?" he said, constantly directing her attention to objects above her. But this was a harder task, for the timid eyes had been trained from childhood to look down, and the head was habitually bent, like a pendant flower on its stem. Melvyna had deliberately laid hands upon the heavy veil and white band that formerly encircled the small face. "You cannot breathe in them," she said. But the Sister still wore a light veil over the short dark hair, which would curl in little rings upon her temples in spite of her efforts to prevent it; the cord and heavy beads and cross encircled her slight waist, while the wide sleeves of her nun's garb fell over her hands to the finger tips.

"How do you suppose she would look dressed like other women?" said

Carrington one day. The two men were drifting in their small yacht, lying at ease on the cushions, and smoking.

"Well," answered Keith slowly, "if she was well dressed—very well I mean, say in the French style—and if she had any spirit of her own, any vivacity, you might, with that dark face of hers and those eyes—you *might* call her piquant."

"Spirit? She has not the spirit of a fly," said Carrington, knocking the ashes out of his pipe and fumbling in an embroidered velvet pouch, one of many offerings at his shrine, for a fresh supply of the strong aromatic tobacco he affected, Keith meanwhile smoking nothing but the most delicate cigarettes. "The other day I heard a wild scream; and rushing down stairs I found her half fainting on the steps, all in a little heap. And what do you think it was? She had been sitting there, lost in a dream—mystic, I suppose, like St. Agnes—

Deep on the convent roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon:
My breath to heaven like vapor goes.
May my soul follow soon—

and that sort of thing."

"No," said Keith, "there is nothing mystical about the Luke maiden; she has never even dreamed of the ideal ecstasies of deeper minds. She says her little prayers simply, almost mechanically, so many every day, and dwells as it were content in the lowly valleys of religion."

"Well, whatever she was doing," continued Carrington, "a great sea crab had crawled up and taken hold of the toe of her little shoe. Grand tableau—crab and Luke maiden! And the crab had decidedly the better of it."

"She *is* absurdly timid," admitted Keith.

And absurdly timid she was now, when, having crossed the stretch of sand and wound in and out among the low hillocks, they came to the hollow where grew the dark green thicket, through which they must pass to reach the Appalachian range, the backbone

of the island, where the trail gave them an easier way than over the sands. Carrington went first and hacked out a path with his knife; Keith followed, and held back the branches; the whole distance was not more than twelve feet; but its recesses looked dark and shadowy to the little Sister, and she hesitated.

"Come," said Carrington; "we shall never reach the salt marsh at this rate."

"There is nothing dangerous here, señora," said Keith. "Look, you can see for yourself. And there are three of us to help you."

"Yes," said Pedro—"three of us." And he swung his broad bulk into the gap.

Still she hesitated.

"Of what are you afraid?" called out Carrington impatiently.

"I know not indeed," she answered, almost in tears over her own behavior, yet unable to stir. Keith came back, and saw that she was trembling—not violently, but in a subdued, helpless sort of a way which was pathetic in its very causelessness.

"Take her up, Pedro," he ordered; and before she could object, the good-natured giant had borne her in three strides through the dreaded region, and set her down safely upon the ridge. She followed them humbly now, along the safe path, trying to step firmly, and walk with her head up, as Keith had directed. Carrington had already forgotten her again, and even Keith was eagerly looking ahead for the first glimpse of green.

"There is something singularly fascinating in the stretch of a salt marsh," he said. "Its level has such a far sweep as you stand and gaze across it, and you have a dreamy feeling that there is no end to it. The stiff drenched grasses hold the salt which the tide brings in twice a day, and you inhale that fresh, strong, briny odor, the rank, salt, invigorating smell of the sea; the breeze that blows across has a tang to it like the snap of a whip lash across your face, bringing

the blood to the surface, and rousing you to a quicker pace."

"Ha!" said Carrington; "there it is. Don't you see the green? A little further on, you will see the mast of the boat."

"That is all that is wanted," said Keith. "A salt marsh is not complete without a boat tilted up aground somewhere, with its slender dark mast outlined against the sky. A boat sailing along in a commonplace way would blight the whole thing; what we want is an abandoned craft, aged and deserted, aground down the marsh with only its mast rising above the green."

"*Bien!* there it is," said Carrington; "and now the question is, how to get to it."

"You two giants will have to go alone," said Keith, finding a comfortable seat. "I see a mile or two of tall wading before us, and up to your shoulders is over my head. I went duck-shooting with that man last year, señora. 'Come on,' he cried—'splendid sport ahead, old fellow; come on.'"

"Is it deep?" I asked from behind. I was already up to my knees, and could not see bottom, the water was so dark.

"Oh no, not at all; just right," he answered, striding ahead. "Come on."

"I came; and went in up to my eyes."

But the señora did not smile.

"You know Carrington is taller than I am," explained Keith, amused by the novelty of seeing his own stories fall flat in dead failure.

"Is he?" said the Sister vaguely.

It was evident that she had not observed whether he was or not.

Carrington stopped short, and for an instant stared blankly at her. What every one noticed and admired all over the country wherever he went, this little silent creature had not even seen!

"He will never forgive you," said Keith laughing, as the two tall forms strode off into the marsh. Then, seeing that she did not comprehend in the least, he made a seat for her by

spreading his light coat on the Appalachian chain, and leaning back on his elbow, began talking to her about the marsh. "Breathe in the strong salt," he said, "and let your eyes rest on the green, reedy waste. Supposing you were painting a picture, now—does any one paint pictures at your convent?"

"Ah, yes," said the little nun, rousing to animation at once. "Sister St. James paints pictures the most beautiful on earth. She painted for us Santa Inez with her lamb, and Santa Rufina of Sevilla, with her palms and earthen vases."

"And has she not taught you to paint also?"

"Me! Oh, no. I am only a Sister, young and of no gifts. Sister St. James is a great saint, and of age she has seventy years."

"Not requisites for painting, either of them, that I am aware," said Keith. "However, if you were painting this marsh, do you not see how the mast of that boat makes the feature of the landscape the one human element; and yet, even that abandoned, merged as it were in the desolate wildness of the scene?"

The Sister looked over the green earnestly, as if trying to see all that he suggested. Keith talked on. He knew that he talked well, and he did not confuse her with more than one subject, but dwelt upon the marsh: stories of men who had been lost in them, of women who had floated down in boats and never returned; descriptions clear as etchings; studies of the monotone of hues before them—one subject pictured over and over again, as, wishing to instruct a child, he would have drawn with a chalk one letter of the alphabet a hundred times, until the wandering eyes had learned at last to recognize and know it. "Do you see nothing at all, feel nothing at all?" he said. "Tell me exactly."

Thus urged, the Sister replied that she thought she did feel the salt breeze a little.

"Then take off that shroud and en-

joy it," said Keith, extending his arm suddenly, and sweeping off the long veil by the corner that was nearest to him.

"Oh!" said the little Sister; "oh!" and distressfully she covered her head with her hands, as if trying to shield herself from the terrible light of day. But the veil had gone down into the thicket, whither she dared not follow. She stood irresolute.

"I will get it for you before the others come back," said Keith. "It is gone now, however, and what is more, you could not help it; so sit down, like a sensible creature, and enjoy the breeze."

The little nun sat down, and confusedly tried to be a sensible creature. Her head, with its short rings of dark hair, rose childlike from the black gown she wore, and the breeze swept freshly over her; but her eyes were full of tears, and her face so pleading in its pale, silent distress, that at length Keith went down and brought back the veil.

"See the cranes flying home," he said, as the long line dotted the red of the west. "They always seem to be flying right into the sunset, sensible birds."

The little Sister had heard that word twice now; evidently the cranes were more sensible than she. She sighed as she fastened on the veil; there were a great many hard things out in the world, then, she thought. At the dear convent it was not expected that one should be as a crane.

The other two came back at length, wet and triumphant, with their prize. They had stopped to bail it out, plug its cracks, mend the old sail after a fashion, and nothing would do but that the three should sail home in it; Pedro, for whom there was no room, returning by the way they had come. Carrington, having worked hard, was determined to carry out his plan; and said so.

"A fine plan to give us all a wetting," remarked Keith.

"You go down there and work an

hour or two yourself, and see how *you* like it," answered the other, with the irrelevance produced by aching muscles and perspiration dripping from every pore.

This conversation had taken place at the edge of the marsh where they had brought the boat up through one of the numerous channels.

"Very well," said Keith. "But mind you, not a word about danger before the Sister. I shall have hard enough work to persuade her to come with us as it is."

He went back to the ridge, and carelessly suggested returning home by water. "You will not have to go through the thicket then," he said.

Somewhat to his surprise, Sister St. Luke consented immediately, and followed without a word as he led the way. She was mortally afraid of the water, but, during his absence, she had been telling her beads, and thinking with contrition of two obstinacies in one day: that of the thicket and that of the veil; she could not, she would not have three. So, commending herself to all the saints, she embarked.

"Look here, Carrington, if ever you inveigle me into such danger again for a mere fool's fancy, I will show you what I think of it. You knew the condition of that boat, and I did not," said Keith sternly as the two men stood at last on the beach in front of the light-house. The Sister had gone within, glad to feel land underfoot once more. She had sat quietly in her place all the way, afraid of the water, of the wind, of everything, but entirely unconscious of the real danger that menaced them. For the little craft would not mind her helm; her mast slipped about erratically; the planking at the bow seemed about to give way altogether; and they were on a lee shore, with the tide coming in, and the surf beating roughly on the beach. They were both good sailors, but it had taken all they knew to bring the boat safely to the light-house.

"To tell the truth, I did not think she was so crippled," said Carrington. "She really is a good boat for her size."

"Very," said Keith sarcastically.

But the younger man clung to his opinion; and in order to verify it, he set himself to work repairing the little craft. You would have supposed his daily bread depended upon her being made seaworthy by the way he labored. She was made over from stem to stern: a new mast, a new sail; and, finally, scarlet and green paint were brought over from the village, and out she came as brilliant as a young paroquet. Then Carrington took to sailing in her. Proud of his handy work, he sailed up and down, over to the reef, and up the inlet, and even persuaded Melvyna to go with him once, accompanied by the meek little Sister.

"Why shouldn't you both learn how to manage her?" he said in his enthusiasm. "She's as easy to manage as a child——"

"And as easy to tip over," replied Melvyna, screwing up her lips tightly and shaking her head. "You don't catch me out in her again, sure as my name's Sawyer."

For Melvyna always remained a Sawyer in her own mind, in spite of her spouse's name; she could not, indeed, be anything else—*noblesse oblige*. But the Sister, obedient as usual, bent her eyes in turn upon the ropes, the mast, the sail, and the helm, while Carrington, waxing eloquent over his favorite science, delivered a lecture upon their uses and made her experiment a little to see if she comprehended. He used the simplest words for her benefit, words of one syllable, and unconsciously elevated his voice somewhat, as though that would make her understand better; her wits seemed to him always of the slowest. The Sister followed his directions and imitated his motions with painstaking minuteness. She did very well until a large porpoise rolled up his dark, glistening back close alongside, when, dropping the sail-rope with a scream,

she crouched down at Melvyna's feet and hid her face in her veil. Carrington from that day could get no more passengers for his paroquet boat. But he sailed up and down alone in his little craft, and when that amusement palled he took the remainder of the scarlet and green paint and adorned the shells of various sea-crabs and other crawling things, so that the little Sister was met one afternoon by a whole procession of unearthly creatures, strangely variegated, proceeding gravely in single file down the beach from the pen where they had been confined. Keith pointed out to her, however, the probability of their being much admired in their own circles as long as the hues lasted, and she was comforted.

They strolled down the beach now every afternoon, sometimes two, sometimes three, sometimes four when Melvyna had no cooking to watch, no bread to bake; for she rejected with scorn the omnipresent hot biscuit of the South, and kept her household supplied with light loaves in spite of the difficulties of yeast. Sister St. Luke had learned to endure the crabs, but she still fled from the fiddlers when they strayed over from their towns in the marsh; she still went carefully around the great jelly fish sprawling on the beach, and regarded from a safe distance the beautiful blue Portuguese men-of-war, stranded unexpectedly on the dangerous shore, all their fair voyagings over. Keith collected for her the brilliant sea-weeds, little flecks of color on the white sand, and showed her their beauties; he made her notice all the varieties of shells, enormous conches for the tritons to blow, and beds of wee pink ovals and cornucopias, plates and cups for the little web-footed fairies. Once he came upon a sea bean.

"It has drifted over from one of the West Indian islands," he said, polishing it with his handkerchief—"one of the islands—let us say Miraprovos—a palmy tropical name, bringing up visions of a volcanic mountain, vast

cliffs, a tangled gorgeous forest, and the soft lapping wash of tropical seas. Is it not so, señora?"

But the señora had never heard of the West Indian islands. Being told, she replied, "As you say it, it is so. There is, then, much land in the world?"

"If you keep the sea bean for ever, good will come," said Keith, gravely presenting it; "but if after having once accepted it, you then lose it, evil will fall upon you."

The Sister received the amulet with believing reverence. "I will lay it up before the shrine of Our Lady," she said, carefully placing it in the little pocket over her heart, hidden among the folds of her gown, where she kept her most precious treasures—a bead of a rosary that had belonged to some saint who lived somewhere some time, a little faded prayer copied in the handwriting of a young nun who had died some years before and whom she had dearly loved, and a list of her own most vicious faults, to be read over and lamented daily; crying evils such as a perverse and insubordinate bearing, a heart froward and evil, gluttonous desires of the flesh, and a spirit of murderous rage. These were her own ideas of herself, written down at the convent. Had she not behaved herself perversely to the Sister Paula, with whom one should be always mild on account of the affliction which had sharpened her tongue? Had she not wrongfully coveted the cell of the novice Felipa, because it looked out upon the orange walk? Had she not gluttonously longed for more of the delectable marmalade made by the aged Sanchita? And worse than all, had she not, in a spirit of murderous rage, beat the yellow cat with a palm branch for carrying off the young doves, her especial charge? "Ah, my sins are great indeed," she sighed daily upon her knees, and smote her breast with tears.

Keith watched the sea bean go into the little heart-pocket almost with compunction. Many of these amulets

of the sea, gathered during his winter rambles, had he bestowed with formal warning of their magic powers, and many a fair hand had taken them, many a soft voice had promised to keep them "for ever." But he well knew they would be mislaid and forgotten in a day. The fair ones well knew it too, and each knew that the other knew, so no harm was done. But this sea bean, he thought, would have a different fate—laid up in some little nook before the shrine, a witness to the daily prayers of the simple-hearted little Sister. "I hope they may do it good," he thought vaguely. Then, reflecting that even the most depraved bean would not probably be much affected by the prayers, he laughed off the fancy, yet did not quite like to think, after all, that the prayers were of no use. Keith's religion, however, was in the primary rocks.

Far down the beach they came upon a wreck, an old and long hidden relic of the past. The low sand-bluff had caved away suddenly and left a clean new side, where, imbedded in the lower part, they saw a ponderous mast. "An old Spanish galleon," said Keith, stooping to examine the remains. "I know it by the curious bolts. They ran ashore here, broadside on, in one of those sudden tornadoes they have along this coast once in a while, I presume. Singular! This was my very place for lying in the sun and letting the blaze scorch me with its clear scintillant splendor. I never imagined I was lying on the bones of this old Spaniard."

"God rest the souls of the sailors," said the Sister, making the sign of the cross.

"They have been in—wherever they are, let us say, for about three centuries now," observed Keith, "and must be used to it, good or bad."

"Nay; but purgatory, señor."

"True. I had forgotten that," said Keith.

One morning there came up a dense, soft, southern-sea fog, "The kind you can cut with a knife," Carrington said.

It lasted for days, sweeping out to sea at night on the land breeze, and lying in a gray bank low down on the horizon, and then rolling in again in the morning enveloping the water and the island in a thick white cloud which was not mist and did not seem damp even, so freshly, softly salt was the feeling it gave to the faces that went abroad in it. Carrington and Keith, of course, must needs be out in it every moment of the time. They walked down the beach for miles in the fog, hearing the muffled sound of the near waves, but not seeing them. They sailed in the fog, not knowing whither they went, and they drifted out at sunset and watched the land breeze lift it, roll it up, and carry it out to sea, where distant ships on the horizon line, bound southward, and nearer ones, sailing northward with the Gulf stream, found themselves enveloped for the night and bothered by their old and baffling foe. They went over to the reef every morning, these two, and bathed in the fog, coming back by sense of feeling, as it were, and landing not infrequently a mile below or above the light-house; then what appetites they had for breakfast. And if it was not ready, they roamed about roaring like young lions. At least that is what Melvyna said one morning when Carrington had put his curly head into her kitchen door six times in the course of one half hour.

The Sister shrank from the sea fog; she had never seen one before, and she said it was like a great soft white creature that came in on wings, and brooded over the earth. "Yes, beautiful, perhaps," she said in reply to Keith, "but it is so strange—and—and—I know not how to say it—but it seems like a place for spirits to walk, and not of the mortal kind."

They were wandering down the beach, where Keith had lured her to listen to the sound of the hidden waves. At that moment Carrington loomed into view coming toward them. He seemed of giant size as he appeared, passed them, and disap-

peared again into the cloud behind, his voice sounding muffled as he greeted them. The Sister shrank nearer to her companion as the figure had suddenly made itself visible. "Do you know it is a wonder to me how you have ever managed to live, so far?" said Keith smiling.

"But it was not far," said the little nun. "Nothing was ever far at the dear convent, but everything was near, and not of strangeness to make one afraid; the garden wall was the end. There we go not outside, but our walk is always from the lime tree to the white rosebush and back again. Everything we know there—not roar of waves, not strong wind, not the thick, white air comes to give us fear, but all is still and at peace. At night I dream of the organ, and of the orange trees, and of the doves. I wake, and hear only the sound of the great water below."

"You will go back," said Keith.

He had begun to pity her lately, for her longing was deeper than he had supposed. It had its roots in her very being. He had studied her and found it so.

"She will die of pure homesickness if she stays here much longer," he said to Carrington. "What do you think of our writing down to that old convent and offering—of course unknown to her—to pay the little she costs them, if they will take her back?"

"All right," said Carrington. "Go ahead."

He was making a larger sail for his parquet boat. "If none of you will go out in her, I might as well have all the sport I can," he said.

"Sport to consist in being swamped?" Keith asked.

"By no means, croaker. Sport to consist in shooting over the water like a rocket; I sitting on the tilted edge, watching the waves, the winds, and the clouds, and hearing the water sing as we rush along."

Keith took counsel with no one else, not even with Melvyna, but presently he wrote his letter and carried it him-

self over to the village to mail. He did good deeds like that once in a while, "to help humanity," he said; they were tangible always, like the primary rocks.

At length one evening the fog rolled out to sea for good and all, at least as far as the shore was concerned. In the morning there stood the light-house, and the island, and the reef, just the same as ever. Someway they had almost expected to see them altered or melted a little.

"Let us go over to the reef, all of us, and spend the day," said Keith. "It will do us good to breathe the clear air, and feel the brilliant, dry, hot sunshine again."

"Hear the man!" said Melvyna laughing. "After trying to persuade us all those days that he liked that sticky fog too!"

"Mme. Gonsalvez, we like a lily; but is that any reason why we may not also like a rose?"

"Neither of 'em grows on this beach as I'm aware of," answered Melvyna dryly.

Then Carrington put in his voice, and carried the day. Women never resisted Carrington long, but yielded almost unconsciously to the influence of his height, and his strength, and his strong, hearty will. A subtler influence over them, however, would have waked resistance, and Carrington himself would have been conquered far sooner (and was conquered later) by one who remained unswayed by those mere outer influences, to which the crowd of fair ones, however, paid involuntary obeisance.

Pedro had gone to the village for his supplies and his two days of mild Minorcan dissipation, and Melvyna, beguiled and cajoled by the chaffing of the two young men, at last consented, and not only packed the lunch-basket with careful hand, but even donned for the occasion her "best bonnet," a structure trimmed in Vermont seven years before by the experienced hand of Miss Althy Spears, the village milliner, who had adorned it

with a durable green ribbon and a vigorous wreath of artificial flowers. Thus helmeted, Mme. Gonsalvez presided at the stern of the boat with great dignity. For they were in the safe well-appointed little yacht belonging to the two gentlemen, the daring paroquet having been left at home tied to the last of a low heap of rocks that jutted out into the water in front of the light-house, the only remains of the old stone dock built by the Spaniards long before. Sister St. Luke was with them of course, gentle and frightened as usual. Her breath came quickly as they neared the reef, and Carrington with a sure hand guided the little craft outside into the surf, and rounding a point, landed them safely in a miniature harbor he had noted there. Keith had counted the days, and felt sure that the answer from the convent would come soon. His offer—for he had made it his alone without Carrington's aid—had been munificent; there could be but one reply. The little Sister would soon go back to the lime tree, the white rosebush, the doves, the old organ that was "so large"—all the quiet routine of the life she loved so well; and they would see her small oval face and timid dark eyes no more for ever. So he took her for a last walk down the reef, while Melvyna made coffee, and Carrington, having noticed a dark line floating on the water, immediately went out in the boat, of course to see what it was.

The reef had its high backbone, like the island. Some day it would be the island with another reef outside, and the light-house beach would belong to the mainland. Down the stretch of sand toward the sea the pelicans stood in rows, toeing a mark, solemn and heavy, by the hundreds—a countless number—for the reef was their gathering place.

"They are holding a conclave," said Keith. "That old fellow has the floor. See him wag his head."

In and out among the pelicans, and paying no attention to them and their conclave, sped the sickle-bill curlews,

actively probing everywhere with their long, grotesque, sickle-shaped bills; and woe be to the burrowing things that came in their way. The red-beaked oyster bird flew by, and close down to the sea skimmed the razor-bill shear-water, with his head bent forward and his feet tilted up, just grazing the water with his open bill as he flew, and leaving a shining mark behind, as though he held a pencil in his mouth and was running a line. The lazy gulls, who had no work to do, and would not have done it if they had, rode at ease on the little wavelets close in shore. The Sister, being asked, confessed that she liked the lazy gulls best. Being pressed to say why, she thought it was because they were more like the white doves that sat on the old stone well-curb in the convent garden.

Keith had always maintained that he liked to talk to women. He said that the talk of any woman was more piquant than the conversation of the most brilliant men. There was only one obstacle: the absolute inability of the sex to be sincere, or to tell the truth, for ten consecutive minutes. To-day, however, as he wandered to and fro whither he would on the reef, he also wandered to and fro whither he would in the mind, and the absolutely truthful mind too, of a woman. Yet he found it dull! He sighed to himself, but was obliged to acknowledge that it *was* dull. The lime tree, the organ, the Sisters, the Sisters, the lime tree, the organ; it grew monotonous after a while. Yet he held his post, for the sake of the old theory, until the high voice of Melvyna called them back to the little fire on the beach and the white cloth spread with her best dainties. They saw Carrington sailing in with an excited air, and presently he brought the boat into the cove and dragged ashore his prize, towed behind—nothing less than a large shark, wounded, dead, after a struggle with some other marine monster, a sword fish probably. "A man-eater," announced the captor. "Look

at him, will you? Look at him, Miss Luke!"

But Miss Luke went far away, and would not look. In truth he was an ugly creature; even Melvyna kept at a safe distance. But the two men noted all his points; they measured him carefully; they turned him over, and discussed him generally in that closely confined and exhaustive way which marks the masculine mind. Set two women to discussing a shark, or even the most lovely little brook trout, if you please, and see how far off they will be in fifteen minutes!

But the lunch was tempting, and finally its discussion called them away even from that of the shark. And then they all sailed homeward over the green and blue water, while the white sand hills shone silvery before them, and then turned red in the sunset. That night the moon was at its full. Keith went out and strolled up and down on the beach. Carrington was playing fox-and-goose with Mme. Gonsalvez on a board he had good-naturedly constructed for her entertainment when she confessed one day to a youthful fondness for that exciting game. Up stairs gleamed the little Sister's light. "Saying her prayers with her lips, but thinking all the time of that old convent," said the stroller to himself, half scornfully. And he said the truth.

The sea was still and radiant; hardly more than a ripple broke at his feet; the tide was out, and the broad beach silvery and fresh. "At home they are buried in snow," he thought, "and the wind is whistling around their double windows." And then he stretched himself on the sand, and lay looking upward into the deep blue of the night, bathed in the moonlight, and listening dreamily to the soft sound of the water as it returned slowly, slowly back from the African coast. He thought many thoughts, and deep ones too, for his mind was of a high order; and at last he was so far away on ideal heights that, coming home after midnight, it was no wonder

if, half unconsciously, he felt himself above the others; especially when he passed the little Sister's closed door, and thought, smiling not unkindly, how simple she was.

The next morning the two men went off in their boat again for the day, this time alone. There were still a few more questions to settle about that shark, and, to tell the truth, they both liked a good day of unencumbered sailing better than anything else.

About four o'clock in the afternoon Melvyna, happening to look out of the door, saw a cloud no bigger than a man's hand low down on the horizon line of the sea. Something made her stand and watch it for a few moments. Then, "Miss Luke! Miss Luke! Miss Luke! Miss Luke!" she called quickly. Down came the little Sister, startled at the cry, her lace work still in her hand.

"Look!" said Melvyna.

The Sister looked, and this is what she saw: a line white as milk coming toward them on the water, and behind it a blackness.

"What is it?" she asked.

"A tornado," said Melvyna with white lips. "I've only seen one, and then I was over in the town; but it's awful! We must run back to the thicket." Seizing her companion's arm, the strong Northern woman hurried her across the sand, through the belt of sand hills, and into the thicket, where they crouched on its far side close down under the protecting backbone. "The bushes will break the sand, and the ridge will keep us from being buried in it," she said. "I dursn't stay on the shore, for the water'll rise."

The words were hardly spoken before the tornado was upon them, and the air was filled with the flying sand, so that they could hardly breathe. Half choked, they beat with their hands before them to catch a breath. Then came a roar, and for an instant, distant as they were, they caught a glimpse of the crest of the great wave that followed the whirlwind. It seem-

ed to them mountains high, and ready to engulf the entire land. With a rushing sound it plunged over the keeper's house, broke against the lower story of the tower, hissed across the sand, swallowed the sand hills, and swept to their very feet, then sullenly receded with slow, angry muttering. A gale of wind came next, singularly enough from another direction, as if to restore the equipoise of the atmosphere. But the tornado had gone on inland, where there were trees to uproot, and houses to destroy, and much finer entertainment generally.

As soon as they could speak, "Where are the two out in the sail boat?" asked the Sister.

"God knows!" answered Melvyna. "The last time I noticed their sail they were about a mile outside of the reef."

"I will go and see."

"Go and see! Are you crazy? You can never get through that water."

"The saints would help me, I think," said the little Sister.

She had risen, and now stood regarding the watery waste with the usual timid look in her gentle eyes. Then she stepped forward with her uncertain tread, and before the woman by her side comprehended her purpose she was gone, ankle-deep in the tide, knee-deep, and finally wading across the sand up to her waist in water toward the light-house. The great wave was no deeper, however, even there. She waded to the door of the tower, opened it with difficulty, climbed the stairway, and gained the light room, where the glass of the windows was all shattered, and the little chamber half full of the dead bodies of birds, swept along by the whirlwind and dashed against the tower, none of them falling to the ground or losing an inch of their level in the air as they sped onward, until they struck against some high object, which broke their mad and awful journey. Holding on by the shattered casement, Sister St. Luke gazed out to sea. The wind was blowing fiercely

and the waves were lashed to fury. The sky was inky black. The reef was under water, save one high knob of its backbone, and to that two dark objects were clinging. Further down she saw the wreck of the boat driving before the gale. Pedro was over in the village; the tide was coming in over the high sea, and night was approaching. She walked quickly down the rough stone stairs, stepped into the water again, and waded across where the paroquet boat had been driven against the wall of the house, baled it out with one of Melvyna's pans, and then, climbing in from the window of the sitting-room, she hoisted the sail, and in a moment was out on the dark sea.

Melvyna had ascended to the top of the ridge, and when the sail came into view beyond the house she fell down on her knees and began to pray aloud: "Oh, Lord, save her; save the lamb! She don't know what's she is doing, Lord. She's as simple as a baby. Oh, save her, out on that roaring sea! Good Lord, good Lord, deliver her!" Fragments of prayers she had heard in her prayer-meeting days came confusedly back into her mind, and she repeated them all again and again, wringing her hands as she saw the little craft tilt far over under its all too large sail, so that several times, in the hollows of the waves, she thought it was gone. The wind was blowing hard but steadily, and in a direction that carried the boat straight toward the reef; no tacks were necessary, no change of course; the black-robed little figure simply held the sail rope, and the paroquet drove on. The two clinging to the rock, bruised, exhausted, with the waves rising and falling around them, did not see the boat until it was close upon them.

"By the great heavens!" said Keith.

His face was pallid and rigid, and there was a ghastly cut across his forehead, the work of the sharp-edged rock. The next moment he was on board, brought the boat round just in

time, and helped in Carrington, whose right arm was injured.

"You have saved our lives, señora," he said abruptly.

"By Jove, yes," said Carrington. "We could not have stood it long, and night was coming." Then they gave all their attention to the hazardous start.

Sister St. Luke remained unconscious of the fact that she had done anything remarkable. Her black gown was spoiled, which was a pity, and she knew of a balm which was easily compounded and which would heal their bruises. Did they think Melvyna had come back to the house yet? And did they know that all her dishes were broken—yes, even the cups with the red flowers on the border? Then she grew timorous again, and hid her face from the sight of the waves.

Keith said not a word, but sailed the boat, and it was a wild and dangerous voyage they made, tacking up and down in the gayly painted little craft, that seemed like a toy on that angry water. Once Carrington took the little Sister's hand in his, and pressed his lips fervently upon it. She had never had her hand kissed before, and looked at him, then at the place, with a vague surprise, which soon faded, however, into the old fear of the wind. It was night when at last they reached the light-house; but during the last two tacks they had a light from the window to guide them; and when nearly in they saw the lantern shining out from the shattered windows of the tower in a fitful, surprised sort of a way, for Melvyna had returned, and with the true spirit of a Yankee, had immediately gone to work at the ruins.

The only sign of emotion she gave was to Keith. "I saw it all," she said. "That child went right out after you, in that terrible wind, as natural and as quiet as if she was only going across the room. And she so timid a fly could frighten her! Mark my words, Mr. Keith, the good Lord helped her to do it! And I'll go to

that new mission chapel over in the town every Sunday after this, as sure's my name is Sawyer!" She ceased abruptly, and going into her kitchen, slammed the door behind her. Emotion with Melvyna took the form of roughness.

Sister St. Luke went joyfully back to her convent the next day, for Pedro, when he returned, brought the letter, written, as Keith had directed, in the style of an affectionate invitation. The little nun wept for happiness when she read it. "You see how they love me—love me as I love them," she repeated with innocent triumph again and again.

"It is all we can do," said Keith. "She could not be happy anywhere else, and with the money behind her she will not be neglected. Besides, I really believe they do love her. The sending here up her was probably the result of some outside dictation."

Carrington, however, was dissatisfied. "A pretty return we make for our saved lives," he said. "I hate ingratitude." For Carrington was half disposed now to fall in love with his preserver.

But Keith stood firm.

"Addios," said the little Sister, as Pedro's boat received her. Her face had lighted so with joy and glad anticipation that they hardly knew her. "I wish you could to the convent go with me," she said earnestly to the two young men. "I am sure you would like it." Then, as the boat turned the point, "I am sure you would like it," she called back, crossing her hands on her breast. "It is very heavenly there—very heavenly."

That was the last they saw of her.

Carrington sent down the next winter from New York a large silver crucifix, superbly embossed and ornamented. It was placed on the high altar of the convent, and much admired and revered by all the nuns. Sister St. Luke admired it too. She spoke of the island occasionally, but she did not tell the story of the rescue. She never thought of it. There-

fore, in the matter of the crucifix, the belief was that a special grace had touched the young man's heart. And prayers were ordered for him. Sister St. Luke tended her doves, and at the hour of meditation paced to and fro between the lime tree and the bush of white roses. When she was thirty years old her cup was full, for then she was permitted to take lessons and play a little upon the old organ.

Melvyna went every Sunday to the bare, struggling little Presbyterian mission over in the town, and she remains to this day a Sawyer.

But Keith remembered. He bares his head silently in reverence to all womanhood, and curbs his cynicism as best he can, for the sake of the little Sister—the sweet little Sister St. Luke.

CONSTANCE FENIMORE WOOLSON.

CLEOPATRA'S SOLILOQUY.

WHAT care I for the tempest? What care I for the rain?
 If it beat upon my bosom, would it cool its burning pain—
 This pain that ne'er has left me since on his heart I lay,
 And sobbed my grief at parting as I'd sob my soul away?
 O Antony! Antony! Antony! when in thy circling arms
 Shall I sacrifice to Eros my glorious woman's charms,
 And burn life's sweetest incense before his sacred shrine
 With the living fire that flashes from thine eyes into mine?
 O when shall I feel thy kisses rain down upon my face,
 As, a queen of love and beauty, I lie in thine embrace,
 Melting—melting—melting, as a woman only can
 When she's a willing captive in the conquering arms of man,
 As he towers a god above her, and to yield is not defeat,
 For love can own no victor if love with love shall meet?
 I still have regal splendor, I still have queenly power,
 And—more than all—unfaded is woman's glorious dower.
 But what care I for pleasure? what's beauty to me now,
 Since Love no longer places his crown upon my brow?
 I have tasted its elixir, its fire has through me flashed,
 But when the wine glowed brightest from my eager lip 'twas dashed.
 And I would give all Egypt but once to feel the bliss
 Which thrills through all my being whene'er I meet his kiss.
 The tempest wildly rages, my hair is wet with rain,
 But it does not still my longing, or cool my burning pain.
 For Nature's storms are nothing to the raging of my soul
 When it burns with jealous frenzy beyond a queen's control.
 I fear not pale Octavia—that haughty Roman dame—
 My lion of the desert—my Antony can tame.
 I fear no Persian beauty, I fear no Grecian maid:
 The world holds not the woman of whom I am afraid.
 But I'm jealous of the rapture I tasted in his kiss,
 And I would not that another should share with me that bliss.