



# MONTZUMA'S DAUGHTER

BY STANLEY HAGGARD

CHAPTER XXXV.  
OTOMIE'S FAREWELL.

Thus, then, did I accomplish the vengeance that I had sworn to my father. I would wreak upon De Garcia, or rather thus did I witness its accomplishment, for in the end he died, terribly enough, not by my hand, but by those of his own fears.

When De Garcia was gone into the pit, I turned my steps homeward, or rather toward the ruined city which I could see beneath me, for I had no home left.

It was near sunset when I came thither, for the road was long, and I grew weak. By the palace I met the Captain Diaz and some of his company, and they lifted me and bore me to my father's tomb, for they had respect for my sorrows. Only Diaz spoke, saying:

"Is the murderer dead?"  
I nodded and went on. I went on to our chamber, for there I thought that I should find Otomie.

She sat in it alone, cold and beautiful, as though she had been fashioned in marble.

"I have buried him with the bones of his brethren and his forefathers," she said, answering the question that my eyes asked. "It seemed best that you should see him no more, lest your heart should break."

"It is well," I answered, "but my heart is broken already."  
"Is the murderer dead?" she said presently in the very words of Diaz.

"He is dead."  
"How?"  
I told her in few words.

"You should have slain him yourself. One man's blood is not avenged."  
"I should have slain him, but in that hour I did not seek vengeance. I watched it fall from heaven and was content. Perchance it is best so. The seeking of vengeance has brought all my sorrows upon me. Vengeance belongs to God and not to man, as I have learned too late."

"I do not think so," said Otomie, and the look upon her face was that look which I had seen when she smote the ascaban, when she taunted Marina, and when she danced upon the pyramid, the leader of the sacrifice. "Had I been in your place I would have killed him by inches. When I had done with him, then the devils might begin, not before. But it is of no account. Everything is done with all dead, and my heart with them. Now eat, for you are weary."

So I ate, and afterward I cast myself upon the bed and slept.

In the darkness I heard the voice of Otomie that said, "Awake, I would speak with you." And awake I was that about her voice which stirred me from my heavy sleep.

"Speak on," I said. "Where are you, Otomie?"  
"Seated at your side. I cannot rest, so I am seated here. Listen. Many, many years ago we met, when you were brought by Guatemala from Tabasco. Ah, well, do I remember my first sight of you, my Teule, in the court of my father, Montezuma, at Chapultepec. I loved you then as I have loved you ever since. At least I have never gone astray after strange gods," and she laughed bitterly.

"Why do you talk of these things, Otomie?" I asked.

"Because it is my fancy to do so. Cannot you spare me one hour from your sleep, who have spared you so many? You remember how you scorned me—oh! I thought I should have died of shame when after I had caused myself to be given to you as wife, the wife of Tezcat, you told me of the maid across the sea, that Lily maid whose token is still set upon your finger. But I lived through it and loved you the better for your honesty, and then you know the rest. I won you because I was brave and lay at your side upon the stone of sacrifice, where you kissed me and told me that you loved me. But you never loved me—no, truly. All the while you were thinking of the Lily maid. I knew it then, as I know it now, though I tried to deceive myself. I was beautiful in those days, and this is something with a man. I was faithful, and you never loved me once or twice you thought that you loved me. Now I wish that those Teules had come an hour later and we had died together there upon the stone—that is, I wish it for my own sake, not for yours. Then we escaped, and they were avenged. I told you then that I understood it all. You had kissed me on the stone of sacrifice, but in that moment you were as one dead. When you came back to life, it was otherwise. But you never loved me, and you swore an oath to me, and this oath you have kept faithfully. You married me, but you did not know whom you married. You thought me beautiful and sweet and true, and all these things I was, but you did not understand that I was far apart from you—that I was still a savage as my forefathers had been. You thought that I had learned your ways; perchance even you thought that I revered your God, as for your sake I have striven to do, but all the while I have followed the ways of my own people, and I could not quite forget my own gods, or at least they would not suffer me, their servant, to escape them. For years and years I put them from me, but at last they were avenged, and my heart mastered me, or rather they mastered me, for I knew nothing of what I did some few nights since, when I celebrated the sacrifice of Huitzil and you saw me at the ancient rites."

"All these years, you had been true to me, and I had borne you children, whom you loved, but you loved them for their own sake, not for mine. Indeed at heart you hated the Indian blood that was mixed in their veins with yours. And this I loved in a certain fashion, and this I loved of yours drove me well nigh mad. Such as it was, it died when you saw me distraught and celebrating the rites of my forefathers on the teocalli yonder, and you knew me for what I am—a savage. And now the children who have grown together are dead. One by one they died in this way and in that, for the curse which follows my blood descended upon them, and your love for me is dead with them. I alone remain alive, a monument of past days, and I die also."

"Nay, be silent. Listen to me, for my time is short. When you bade me call you 'husband' no longer, then I knew that it was finished. I obey you. I put you from me. You are no more my husband, and soon I shall cease to be your wife. Still, Teule, I pray you listen to me. Now, it seems to you in your sorrow that your days are done, and that there is no happiness left for you. This is not so. You are still but a man in the beginning of middle age, and you are yet strong. You will escape from this ruined land, and when you shake the dust of it off your feet its curse shall fall from you. You will return to your own place, and there you will find one who has many years, and you will marry. There the savage woman whom you mated with, the princess of a fallen house, will become but a fantastic memory to you, and all these strange, eventful years will be as a midnight dream. Only your love for the dead children will always remain. These you must always love by day and by night, and the desire of them—that desire for the dead that which there is nothing more terrible—shall follow you to your grave. And I am glad that it should be so, for I was their mother, and some thought of me must go with them. This alone the Lily maid has left to me, and there only I shall prevail against her, for Teule, no child of hers shall live to rob your heart of the memory of those I gave you. You swore that death should should sever us, and you kept your oath in the letter and in the thought. But now I go to the houses of the sun to seek my own people, and to you, Teule, with whom I have lived many years and seen much sorrow, but whom I will no longer call husband, since you forbade me so to do, I say, make no mock of me to the Lily maid. Speak of me to her as little as you may, be happy and—farewell!"

Now as she spoke ever more faintly, and I listened bewildered, the light of dawn grew slowly in the chamber. It gathered on the white shape of Otomie seated in a chair hard by the bed, and that saw that her arms hung down, and that



Otomie was seated in a chair by the bed, her head was resting on the back of the chair. Now I sprang up and peered into the room. It was white and cold, and I could feel no breath upon her lips. I seized her hand. That was also cold. I spoke into her ear, I kissed her brow, but she did not move nor answer. The light grew quickly, and now I saw all—Otomie was dead!

At last I rose with a sigh to seek help, and as I rose I felt that there was something of great moment which Guatemala had given to me and that I had given to Otomie. She had set it there while I slept, and with it a lock of her long hair. Both shall be buried with me.

I laid her in the ancient sepulcher amid the bones of her forefathers and by the bodies of her children, and two days later I rode to Mexico in the train of Bernal Diaz. At the mouth of the pass I turned and looked back upon the peaks of the City of Pines, where I had lived so many years and where all I loved were buried. Long and earnestly I gazed, as in his hour of death a man looks back upon his past life, till at length Diaz laid his hand upon my shoulder.

"You are a lonely man now, comrade," he said. "What plans have you for the future?"  
"None," I answered, "except to die."

"Never talk so," he said. "Why, you are scarcely 40, and I who am 50 and more do not speak of dying. Listen. You have friends in your own country—England?"  
"I had."

"Folk live long in those quiet lands. Go seek them. I will find you a passage to Spain."  
"I will think of it," I answered.

In time we came to Mexico, and Diaz found me a lodging. I abode in Mexico 10 days, wandering sadly about the city and up to the hill of Chapultepec, where Montezuma's pleasure house had been and where I had met Otomie. Nothing was left of its glories except some of the ancient cedar trees. On the eighth day of my stay an Indian stopped me in the street, saying that an old friend had charged him to say she wished to see me.

I followed the Indian, wondering who the friend might be, for I had no friends, and he led me to a fine stone house in a new street. Here I was seated in a darkened room, and I heard a woman's voice suddenly a sad and sweet voice that seemed familiar to me addressed me in the Aztec tongue, saying, "Welcome, Teule."

I looked, and there before me, dressed in the Spanish fashion, stood a lady, an Indian, still beautiful, but very feeble and much worn, as though with sickness and sorrow.

"Do you not know Marina, Teule?" she said again, but before the words had left her lips I knew her. "Well, I will say this—that I should scarcely have known you, Teule! Trouble and time have done their work with both of us."

I took her hand and kissed it.  
"Where, then, is Cortes?" I asked.  
"Cortes is in Spain, pleading his suit. He has wed a new wife there, Teule. Many years ago he put me away, giving me in marriage to Don Juan Xaramillo, who took me because he possessed a fortune for Cortes dealt liberally with me, his discarded mistress." And she began to weep.

Then by degrees I learned the story, but I will not write it here, for it is known to the world. When Marina had served her term and her wish was no more service to him, the conqueror discarded her, leaving her to the whim of a broken heart. She told me all the tale of her anguish when she learned the truth and of how she had cried to him that therefor he would never prosper. Now indeed he did do so.

For two hours or more we talked, and when I had heard her story I told her mine, and she wept for me, since with all her faults Marina's heart was ever gentle.

Then we parted, never to meet again. Before I went she pressed a gift of money on me, and I was not ashamed to take it, who had none.

This, then, was the history of Marina, who betrayed her country for her love's sake, and this the reward of her treason and her love. But I shall always hold her memory sacred, for she was a good friend to me, and twice she saved my life, nor would she desert me, even when Otomie taunted her so cruelly.

CHAPTER XXXVI.  
THOMAS COMES BACK FROM THE DEAD.

Now, on the morning of my visit to Marina the Captain Diaz came to see me and told me that a friend of his was in command of a carak, which was due to sail from the port of Vera Cruz for Cadiz within 10 days, and that his friend was willing to give me a passage if I wished to leave Mexico. I thought for awhile and said that I would go, and that very night, having bid farewell to the Captain Diaz, whom my God prosper, for he was a good man among many bad ones, I set out from the city for the last time in the company of some merchants. A week's journey took us safely down the mountains to Vera Cruz, a hot, unhealthy town, with an indolent atmosphere, much exposed to the fierce northerly winds. Here I presented my letters of recommendation to the commander of the carak, who gave me passage without question, I laying in a stock of food for the journey.

As length our voyage came to an end, and on a certain 12th of June I found myself in the mighty city of London.

In London I bought a good horse, through the kind offices of the host of my inn, and on the morning at daybreak I set out upon the Ipswich road.

I rode hard all that day and the next, and my horse being stout and swift by 7:30 o'clock of the evening I pulled up upon the little hill where I had looked for my last on Bungay, when I rode thence from Yarmouth with my father. Blow me lay the red roofs of the town. Thence to the right were the oaks of Ditchingham and the beautiful tower of St. Mary's church. Yonder the stream of Waveney wandered and before me stretched the meadow lands, purple and golden, with marsh weeds in bloom. All was as it had been. I could see no change at all.

The only change was in myself. I dismounted, and going to a pool of water near the roadway I had at the reflection of my own face. I was changed indeed. Scarcely should I have known it for that of the lad who had ridden up this hill 20 years ago.

Mounting my horse, I pushed on again at a canter, taking the road past Wainford and through the fields and Pirbright town, leaving Bungay upon my left. In 10 minutes I was at the gate of the bridle path that runs from the Norwich road for half a mile or more beneath the steep and wooded bank under the shadow of which stands the house of Pirbright.

Now the house was before me. It had changed no more, except that the ivy and creepers on the roof had grown higher—to the roof itself—and I could see that people

kept and snobs hung above the chimneys. The gate was locked, and there were no serving men about, for night had fallen, and all had ceased from their labor. Leaving the house on the right, I passed round to the stables that are at the back, near the hillside garden, but here the gate was locked also, and I dismounted, not knowing what to do. Indeed I was so unmanned with fear and doubt that for awhile I seemed bewildered, and leaving the horse to crop the grass where he stood I wandered to the foot of the church path and gazed up the hill as though I waited for the coming of one whom I should meet.

Then suddenly there rose up in my mind a vision of the splendid chamber in Montezuma's palace in Teocuitlan and of myself sleeping on a golden bed and dreaming on that bed—I knew it now. I was the god Tezcat, and on the morrow I must be sacrificed, and I slept in misery, and as I slept I dreamed. I dreamed that I stood where I stood this night, that the scent of the English flowers was in my nostrils as it was this night, and that the sweet song of the nightingales rang in my ears as at this present hour. I dreamed that as I mused and listened the moon came up over the green ash and oaks, and, lo! there she shone. I dreamed that I heard a sound of singing on the hill.

But now I awoke from this vision of the past and of a long lost dream, for I stood the sweet voice of a woman began to sing yonder on the brow of the hill. I was not mad; I heard it clearly, and the sound grew even nearer as the singer drew that I could catch the very words of that sad song, which to this day I remember.

Now I could see a woman's shape in the moonlight. It was tall and stately and clad in a white robe. Presently she lifted her head to watch the flutter of a bat, and

Tall and stately and clad in a white robe, the moonlight lit up her face. It was the face of Lily Bozart, my lost love, beautiful as of yore, though grown older and sturdier, and with the seal of some great sorrow. I saw, and so deeply was I stirred at the sight that had it not been for the long pining to which I clung I might have fallen to the earth, and a deep groan broke from my lips.

"She heard the groan and ceased her song. Then, catching the sight of the figure of a man, she stopped and turned as though to fly. I stood quite still, and wonder overcame her feet. She drew nearer and spoke in the sweet, low voice that I remembered well, saying: 'Who wanders here so late? Is it you, John?'"

Now when I heard her speak thus a new fear took me. Doubtless she was married, and "John" was her husband. I had found her, but to lose her more completely. Of a sudden it came into my mind that I would not discover myself till I knew the truth. I advanced a pace, but not so far as to pass from the shadow of the stone which grew large and taking my stand in such a fashion that the moonlight did not strike upon my face I bowed low in the courtly Spanish fashion, and disguising my voice spoke as a Spaniard might in broken English, which I spare to write down.

"Madam," I said, "have I the honor to speak to one who in bygone years was named the Senora Lily Bozart?"  
"That was my name," she answered.  
"What is your errand with me, sir?"  
Now I trembled afresh, but spoke on boldly.

"Before I answer, madam, forgive me if I ask another question. Is this still your name?"  
"It is still my name. I am no married woman," she answered, and for a moment the sky seemed to reel above me and the ground to heave beneath my feet like the lava crust of Xaca. But as yet I did not reveal myself, for I wished to learn if she still loved my memory.

"[TO BE CONTINUED.]"

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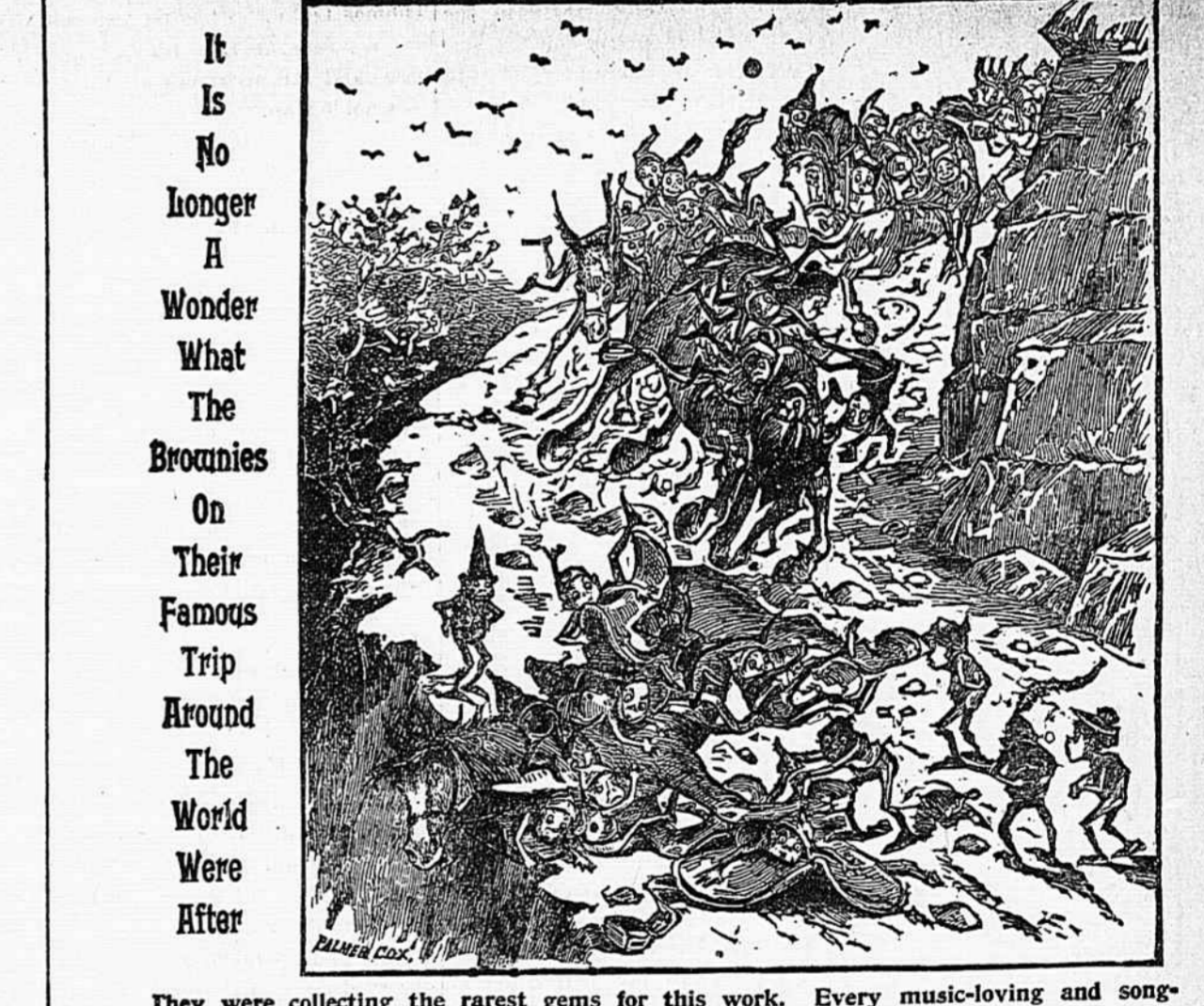
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