

AN OPTICAL ILLUSION.

As sweet as love first spoken. And fair as the lily's pose. She stands in the window looking out. When the day is at its close.

JACQUITA.

Midway between Europe and Africa, the shores washed by the blue waters of the Mediterranean, lies the little island of Minorca.

The largest city—Port Mahon—climbers up and down the cliffs of its lovely harbor in an aimless way, and on first approaching two things strike you.

On a cliff overlooking the harbor and the city is a plaza called the Alameda, where a few ilex trees afford a grateful shade.

One evening not long ago a young girl was seated on the low wall watching the sun sinking in the cloudless sky.

The rattling of the anchor chains roused her and broke the long silence which she had so persistently maintained with her companion.

His passionate gaze contrasted strangely with the girl's indifference. "La Bella Jacquita" she was called, and well did she deserve her name.

As when the sun, breaking through the clouds, bathes the fields in warmth and light, so did that smile transfigure the girl's fair face.

The distant church clock struck 6. Rising, she drew the folds of her mantilla closer, and lifting her eyes to his said softly, "A Riverdale, Felipe!"

His gaze met hers—pride, anger, passion in his eyes. Mastering his excitement, he spoke: "Jacquita, be careful! I am not like those silly lads who come and go at a girl's nod.

He waited. Jacquita pushed the gravel peevishly with her foot, watching the pebbles fly, with a half-mocking smile on her lips.

That night Jacquita wept with fear, excitement and the triumph of having brought Felipe so low as to beg her as she had done that evening.

pretty blond girl followed with an elderly gentleman, and as she went along Jacquita, seeing her exquisite fairness, thought, "The angels must look like that!"

All that day Felipe came not, and the speech of gentle reproach which Jacquita had prepared was not delivered.

A group gathered, among them Francisco, the rival beauty. She was larger in every way than Jacquita.

"Hast heard the news?" she was saying. "As the English were walking back to the yacht this afternoon down on the quay the little boy, catching sight of a large dog ahead,

Just then Felipe himself sauntered up. There was a difference between this unobtrusive young sailor, bearing his honors so lightly, and the passionate lover of the night before.

Felipe turned to Jacquita. She was talking animatedly to a young fellow beside her—scarcelyly oblivious of all else. Felipe's face darkened.

Jacquita alone declined. She was "too tired," she said haughtily. Francisco, struggling her shoulders, murmured: "One of her ugly moods! Sentimental—what a temper!"

Jacquita listened to the retreating footsteps, and her downcast eyes filled with tears, why, she would not own to herself.

Silence, then a smothered oath broke from his lips, and ere she could frame the words of farewell still lingering on her tongue she heard him striding down the street.

Early the next morning, while the Alameda yet lay wrapped in sleep, a girl leaned over the sea wall, gazing with burning eyes at the beautiful boat below.

"La Bella Jacquita" is going daft," cries Francisco as every night the girl walks to the Alameda, watching for a boat that never comes.

One evening she sat gazing at a tramp steamer just anchored. She recalled that other night, and the boat now so far away. Also for the pride of "La Bella of Mahon!"

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