

the door of the room which Helen and Netta jointly occupied. He had spent most of the night in a lover-like rapture, pacing the deck and awaiting his fate.

"If Helen does not encourage me," he tragically decided, "I shall leave the Neptune at the next port. I could not remain and see her won by a rival."

And the day had dawned and Helen had appeared. In honor of the day she wore an underskirt formed of stars and stripes and two dainty silken flags in her hair, but no rosette and only the same kindly gracious smile on her lips.

Then a riotous morning of fire-crackers and feasting and music—had not for Roy. His heart was heavy until Helen had suggested the run-away cruise. And now—lost along a bewildering archipelago of barren islets, the sun swinging low in the golden west and Helen radiant, and gentle, and encouraging.

A flash of supreme happiness enwrap Roy. He drove the boat around a cluster of little islands and gained a free space, but neither up nor down shore was yacht visible.

"You see, Miss Perry," he said helplessly, "no sign of the Neptune. Too bad!"

He had a plan formed in his mind to get around the island and nearer the shore—to follow its contour first north, then south until he could locate the yacht. A glance at the full gauge told him that the feat was impracticable.

"The gasoline is giving out," he reported grievously.

"Then we cannot go much further?" inquired Helen.

"Less than a mile probably."

"There is an island with a high ridge of rocks at one end," suggested she, indicating the point of view.

"Yes, I see it."

"We might take the glass and see if we cannot make out the Neptune—the height will help, don't you think?"

"If we can reach the island," said Roy and started the boat in its direction.

Just barely the engine lasted out till the island was reached. Helen carried the telescope. Roy shouldered a repeating rifle. They left the boat and began the climb of a narrow ledge of rock that arose like some monument. It was no easy journey. When they came to the top they found it to resemble some natural fortification. There was a cave-like depression, some dead trees and its open space looked down upon the point where they had landed.

"Why, look!" suddenly exclaimed Helen.

"The mischief!" echoed Roy.

Twenty canoes filled with dusky savages surrounded the motor boat. Acting on an unhappy impulse to frighten them away, Roy shouted down at them and then fired the gun twice.

With angry cries the natives rowed to a short distance. Then the canoes were staided. A shower of pebbles directed from slings, arrows and darts came raining upon the wayfarers aloft.

"This is serious!" declared Roy solicitously, and he led his fair companion back into the shelter of the cave. She emerged thence as he fell, struck by a rock from below. She soothed his wounded head with her handkerchief. Then she ran back into the cave.

To reappear, however, startlingly! At a glance Roy saw what she had done. Helen had removed her underskirt of stars and stripes. She ran to the edge of the rock waving the red, white and blue, a true banner to the angry mob below.

"They see it! they know it!" she cried exultingly, and this was true. One by one the belligerents paddled away. Somewhere they had learned the power and glory of that protecting flag.

Then the excited ready miss suggested that they gather up all the dry