

**Proposal Rock**

By EBEN B. MATHESON

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They were dawdling about on a seashore. The girl was pretty, though burned brown by the sun. The sleeves of her dress or her waist or whatever it was were rolled under to above her elbows. The fellow was in tennis costume.

"Do you see that rock out there?" she asked, pointing to a protuberance from the water about a hundred yards from shore.

"Yes, I see it."  
"Do you know what it is called?"  
"No."  
"It's Proposal rock."  
"Why do they call it that?"  
"Well, they say that if a girl receives a proposal on that rock she can't refuse."

"Not if the fellow is a cad?"  
"Oh, that isn't what the saying or the legend is. It's kind of romantic, you know. There are no cads in romances."

"There's usually a villain who serves to bring out the virtues of the hero by contrast."  
"It means that if a girl receives a proposal on that rock there is a subtle influence that—that disposes—"

"Her to the man who proposes."  
"How unsentimental you are," she said, with a pout.

"Go on; I won't interrupt you again."  
"The legend is that an Indian maiden called Minne something or other was loved by an Indian—an Indian—"

"Ruck."  
She refused to go any further. The legend was a beautiful one, but he made fun of everything.

"How could one get out on the rock?" he asked.

"Why, in a boat, of course."  
"They might put on bathing suits and walk or swim out."

"I never knew a man so matter of fact. He wouldn't think of proposing to a girl in a bathing suit."

"Why not?"  
"I don't know; I never heard of such a thing."

"The girl at least would certainly know better what she was going to get. Take the man's feet for instance. She could see the bunions—"

She put her hands to her ears.  
"You don't like to look at things as they are, do you?"

"No; not the way you do."  
"When you are married don't you expect your husband to see you in curl papers?"

"How funny! I never thought about it."  
"Or see you take the balloons and rats out of your hair?"

"I'm not talking about after they are married. It's the proposal that interests me. But don't let's talk any more about it; you stab all sentiment. I don't believe you have a sentimental hair on your head."

"I won't have any kind of a hair on the tip top when I'm thirty. It's pretty thin there already."  
"Oh, dear!"

"I'll go and get a boat and we'll go out on to Proposal rock."

She neither assented nor demurred to this. He left her and, going to the pier nearby, came pulling back in a boat. It was a thin one with out riggers.

"Good gracious! You don't expect me to get into that tippy thing, do you?"

"It's the only one I could get."  
"I couldn't think of going out on the water in it."

"Luce I suppose we can't go to Proposal rock."  
"Proposal rock. We might go another time."

"No. I'm going away soon. There'll be no other opportunity."  
She stepped on to the boat, squatting immediately to prevent upsetting. He pulled away from the shore, the boat dancing on the little rollers that were coming in. She held the gun wale on each side tight, as though she could hold it upright. He pointed for the island, but since from that direction the waves came obliquely he was obliged to point in another. This took him out of his way, and when he turned again toward the rock he got a worse sea than before. A larger wave than the others upset the boat, and they both were spilled into the water. He was a good swimmer and carried her to the rock without difficulty. The girl was very angry.

"You did that yourself," she said.  
"Did what?"

"Upset the boat."  
"Right you are."  
"Why did you do it?"

"On the same principle that a man should propose in a bathing suit that the girl might know better what she's going to get. I wanted to have a look at your temper. Will you marry me?"

The look she gave him was terrible.  
"I wouldn't marry you if you owned the globe and wore an angel's halo around your head."

"Men don't wear halos; you girls do that. I've seen 'em on bargain counters."  
"Will you kindly go out and bring in that boat?"

It was evident that she had got beyond the legend of Proposal island, so he swam out for the boat. She got in, and he pulled her to the shore.

She didn't speak to him for a week; then he proposed again in a milder fashion, and she accepted him.

There have been a good many betrothals on the rock, but the others have all been of the conventional type. This one alone was unique.

**An Apt Pupil.**  
A native Hawaiian woman called on the attorney general at Honolulu the other day to complain of the bad language used by the child of a neighbor in the presence of her own baby. "How old is your neighbor's child?" queried the attorney general. "About six," replied the woman. "I shouldn't think that a child of that age could use much bad language," remarked the attorney general. "You ought to hear him," exclaimed the woman. "Why, he can swear just as good as his father."—Ex.

# HERE IT IS



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