



CHAPTER I

The weathered, one-eyed little pilot who called himself Captain Ramey was an unfamiliar figure on the terraces of Honolulu's luxury hotels; he was here now, at the same table with Karen Waterson and John Colt, only because he was trying to persuade Colt to charter his Diesel boat. In this connection he was telling a rambling story concerned with reefs and shoals, and the tricky currents of the South Seas; but now he stopped abruptly in mid-sentence. His single eye was looking across the lanai of the Royal Hawaiian, across the dimly lighted little tables, to the steps which led onto the open air terrace where they sat.

heard it said he was in the opium trade. And then again I heard it said he was trading Chinese girls; and if any authorities took to over-haul him—why, he just drowned 'em."

"Do you happen," Colt asked Ramey, "to know of anything that Richard Wayne actually did?"

Ramey, who hated to have his stories winnowed out, put forward his next offering with some heat. "Well—everybody knows about the time he threw the U. S. Revenue officer overboard. I don't know why they never hooked him for it, but I got my suspicions. And everybody knows he was the one who shot old Chief Tahili, and the only reason he never came to trial, the natives wouldn't let the French authorities take him, and the whole business got lost in the files. And then there was the time he boarded the British merchant sloop, and took the captain off, at sea; and nothing came of that because nobody on the sloop, not even the captain himself, would testify. All such phoney stuff, like that..."

"But what does he do to make money?" John Colt asked.

Ramey looked sulky. Karen Waterson saw a hopeful flicker pass



"Well, everybody knows about the time he threw the U. S. revenue officer overboard."

across his features, and she knew it represented Ramey's impulse to make up an answer to suit. But the flicker died. Something hard and watchful was always waiting behind Colt's habitually genial eyes. After men had known him for a little while they did not offer him home-made stories about anything.

"I don't know," Ramey said sullenly. Suddenly he flared up. "Give me a few weeks below the line," he almost snarled. "If you think there's anything in the everlasting Pacific that I can't find out—"

Karen Waterson was amazed at the ferocity of the little man. Very evidently, Ramey's pride was touched. If an odd-job man in the Pacific did not possess a futile omniscience, presumably he possessed nothing at all.

But now John Colt sat back; his candid air of interest withdrew itself, gracefully, not too fast.

"I'll see you later, Ramey. Let me hear from you in a week."

For a moment Ramey was motionless, reluctant to leave a scene which he could seldom afford; but he tossed off his drink and rose. "Okay," he said. "Good night, Miss Waterson."

When he was gone John Colt rested his folded arms upon the table and leaned across it toward Karen. "Frightened?" he asked sympathetically.

She met his steady gaze with eyes that were clear and cool under dark brows. "Wherever I am," she said, "there will always be a little of the spirit of fresh country butter, unconscious and unsubdued. No, I'll be honest. I do feel a little lost, I think."

"You'll be over that in a few days. After all, aren't you practically a native daughter? You mustn't forget that you came within an ace of being born in the Islands yourself, child."

"There's nothing here," Karen murmured, "that doesn't seem strange. Even all these people from the Pacific coast look strange, as if they didn't belong here. Like snow on a straw hat. I don't feel as if I belonged here either."

had lived he would have made part of these islands yours, Karen."

"We don't know that," Karen said. "I don't believe he ever even heard I was alive. Oh, what a shocking deprivation!"

"He undoubtedly did not know you were alive," Colt agreed. "If he had known it, he would never have let them get his island away from him. He would have saved it for you. A lonely old man, with no kin left so far as he knew—it's reasonable that he should be reckless with his property; and undoubtedly he was very hard beset when he sold Alaska. But if Garrett Waterson had known he had a granddaughter, things would be different now."

She looked at him gratefully. It was hard to imagine John Colt failing in anything; and this, rather than his smile, with its easy, superficial warmth, conveyed a certain reassurance to Karen.

"I have been very fortunate in finding out what we needed to know," John Colt said now. "Some of it has cost a little money, but not too much. I'm glad to say that all reports are extremely favorable. We have dug up more witnesses, and more conclusive testimony that we could possibly have hoped. And when it comes to the present condition of your island—"

"It isn't my island yet."

"You simply have to hold in mind that it is rightfully yours. And it's going to be yours in actuality. Your claim has a wealth of legal precedent here, principally because of the white man's habit of separating the natives from their things. What I started to say is that the Alakoa plantations are in wonderful shape—I don't see how they can possibly net less than forty or fifty thousand a year. There will be no trouble at all in financing a continuance of activity, without any hitch, as soon as you take over. Old James Wayne has evidently been an excellent manager. After you have taken possession, it may prove wise to employ him as such. That would be feasible with some men—I don't know whether or not it will be possible with James Wayne."

The driving energy behind John Colt never caused him to hurry, nor to stumble. He knew how to attack swiftly, but his plan of attack was always thorough to the last detail.

"I have not the least doubt," he told Karen, "that we'll win your case. Of course there will be several appeals. But I am now convinced that in the end Alakoa will be yours, just as inevitably as sunrise. Very little is left to be done."

Karen drew a deep breath, trying to contemplate rationally this incredible dream in which she, unaccountably, found herself playing a living part.

"The one thing I would like to know now is just what this Richard Wayne, this so-called Tonga Dick, is doing here."

"He's one of the brothers, isn't he? Isn't it natural that he should come back under the—the circumstances?"

"Possibly; but not necessarily. Richard Wayne may or may not expect to inherit a part interest in the island of Alakoa. Certainly he has been at outs with his whole family for some time. I would like to know exactly why he is here."

"But if our case is complete—"

"One thing could beat us, and break our case completely, and lose you Alakoa forever. One thing, and only one thing."

"And that?"

"If you don't mind, I'd rather not discuss that angle of it, even with you."

His eyes did not avoid her as he said that; his practiced air of candor remained imperturbable. Nevertheless, a small unwelcome chill touched Karen. A shadow of something very like unpleasant mystery was beginning to creep into a situation that was already disturbing.

"It must be something pretty poisonous," she said.

"On the contrary, it is a contingency that I think improbable in the extreme. I think it is impossible that we lose. But I still would like to know more about Richard Wayne."

"Why wouldn't it be a dandy idea," Karen said hopefully, "for me to talk it over with Tonga Richard himself?"

"For you to—what?"

"Ask him why he's here."

"Are you being funny?"

"Well, isn't he the only one who knows?"



Only That
Candidate—What did you think of my speech on sound economics?
Listener—Well, there was enough sound.

NOTHING DOING
"Won't you come into the parlor where the light is burning low?"
"No, thank you, Mary darling! I don't like mushrooms, you know."

If He Could
Harry—What would you think of a man who would constantly deceive his wife?
Jim—I'd think he was a wonder.

As the schoolboy wrote it: "People in this country are allowed only one wife. This is called monopoly."

Ruffled
A member of a Ladies' Aid society in a small town went to the bank to deposit, as she told the banker, "some aid money."
Unfortunately the banker thought she said "egg money," and replied: "Remarkable, isn't it, how well the old hens are doing these days?"

Then he couldn't understand why the woman gathered up her passbook and hurried from the bank!

Checking Up
First Salesman—Why, you can't sell that man an encyclopedia!
Second Salesman—Why not?
First Salesman—Because he knows everything there is to know.
Second Salesman—Well, he'll enjoy reading through it and finding the errors.

A Record
Myrtle—How does that fancy clock go that you won at the county fair last month?
Vernon—Fine! In fact, it does an hour in less than 45 minutes.



The Questions

1. In what sport do the participants wear bathing suits but try to keep out of the water?
2. What is the largest railroad tunnel in the Western hemisphere?
3. What is another name for the Suomi?
4. What country ranks next to the United States in the number of miles of railroads?
5. In what year did Joe Louis win the world's heavyweight championship?
6. The trident is the symbol of authority of what god?
7. The massive bronze statue known as Christ of the Andes is on the border between what countries?
8. What is the highest military decoration offered by the United States?
9. In what state are the Finger Lakes?
10. How many cadets have been

The Answers

1. Surf-board riding.
2. Cascade tunnel in Washington (7.79 miles long).
3. Finns.
4. Russia.
5. In 1937.
6. Neptune.
7. Chile and Argentina.
8. The Congressional Medal of Honor.
9. New York (western part).
10. Since its founding in 1802, no more than 23,032 cadets, including foreigners, have been admitted and 12,661 of them graduated. Today fewer than 7,000 of the 90,000 officers in the United States army are West Pointers.

Out of Order

It is because things have been put in the wrong order that the present chaos and disaster is upon the world. The order, expressed in four words, has been: Money, things, man, God. The new order will have to be: God, man, things, money.—The Bishop of Exeter.

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Kipling Found His Anger Was Profitable—to Another

A bus driver once crashed his vehicle into one of the trees outside the home of Rudyard Kipling. The author wrote the man demanding reparation. The driver ignored the complaint and sold the letter to a friend for 10 shillings. Not receiving an answer, Kipling penned another note threatening legal action. This scathing letter the driver also ignored—and sold. Finally losing patience, Kipling called on the man and angrily demanded an explanation. "I was hoping that you would write me some more letters. Selling them is most profitable," replied the man.

How To Relieve Bronchitis

Creomulsion relieves promptly because it goes right to the seat of the trouble to help loosen and expel germ laden phlegm, and aid nature to soothe and heal raw, tender, inflamed bronchial mucous membranes. Tell your druggist to sell you a bottle of Creomulsion with the understanding you must like the way it quickly allays the cough or you are to have your money back.

CREOMULSION for Coughs, Chest Colds, Bronchitis

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(TO BE CONTINUED)