

**FINLEY  
MARTHA**

ELSIE AT  
NANTUCKET

Martha Finley  
**Elsie at Nantucket**

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**Finley M.**

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# Martha Finley Elsie at Nantucket

## PREFACE

Three years ago I spent some six weeks on Nantucket Island, making the town of the same name my headquarters, but visiting other points of interest, to which I take the characters of my story; so that in describing the pleasures of a sojourn there during our heated term, I write from experience; though, in addition to my own notes, I have made use of Northrup's "'Sconset Cottage Life'" to refresh my memory and assist me in giving a correct idea of the life led by summer visitors who take up their abode for the season in one of those odd little dwellings which form the "original 'Sconset."

Should my account of the delights of Nantucket as a summer resort lead any of my readers to try it for themselves, I trust they will not meet with disappointment or find my picture overdrawn.

**M.F.**

## CHAPTER I

*"How happy they,  
Who from the toil and tumult of their lives  
Steal to look down where naught but ocean strives."*

– Byron.

"Well, captain, for how long have you Uncle Sam's permission to stay on shore this time?" asked Mr. Dinsmore, as the family at Ion sat about the breakfast-table on the morning after Captain Raymond's arrival.

"Just one month certain, sir, with the possibility that the leave of absence may be extended," was the reply, in a cheery tone; "and as I want to make the very most of it, I propose that our plans for a summer outing be at once discussed, decided upon, and carried out."

"I second the motion," said Mr. Dinsmore. "Are all the grown people agreed? The consent of the younger ones may safely be taken for granted," he added, with a smiling glance from one to another.

"I am agreed and ready for suggestions," replied his wife.

"And I," said his daughter.

"Vi is, of course, since the proposition comes from her husband," Edward remarked, with a sportive look at her; then glancing at his own little wife: "and as I approve, Zoe will be equally ready with her consent."

"Have you any suggestion to offer, captain?" asked Mr. Dinsmore.

"I have, sir; and it is that we make the island of Nantucket our summer resort for this year, dividing the time, if you like, between Nantucket Town and the quaint little fishing village Siasconset, or 'Sconset, as they call it for short. There is an odd little box of a cottage there belonging to a friend of mine, a Captain Coffin, which I have partially engaged until the first of September. It wouldn't hold nearly all of us, but we may be able to rent another for the season, or we can pitch a tent or two, and those who prefer it can take rooms, with or without board, at the hotels or boarding-houses. What do you all say?" glancing from his mother-in-law to his wife.

"It sounds very pleasant, captain," Elsie said; "but please tell us more about it; I'm afraid I must acknowledge shameful ignorance of that portion of my native land."

"A very small corner of the same, yet a decidedly interesting one," returned the captain; then went on to give a slight sketch of its geography and history.

"It is about fifteen miles long, and averages four in width. Nantucket Town is a beautiful, quaint old place; has some fine wide streets and handsome residences, a great many narrow lanes running in all directions, and many very odd-looking old houses, some of them inhabited, but not a few empty; for of the ten thousand former residents only about three thousand now remain."

"How does that happen, Levis?" asked Violet, as he paused for a moment.

"It used to be a great seat of the whale-fishery," he answered; "indeed, that was the occupation of the vast majority of the men of the island; but, as I presume you know, the whale-fishery has, for a number of years, been declining, partly owing to the scarcity of whales, partly to the discovery of coal-oil, which has been largely substituted for whale-oil as an illuminant (as has gas also, by the way), and to substitutes being found or invented for whale-bone also.

"So the Nantucketers lost their principal employment, and wandered off to different parts of the country or the world in search of another; and the wharves that once presented a scene full of life and bustle are now lonely and deserted. Property there was wonderfully depreciated for a time, but

is rising in value now with the influx of summer visitors. It is becoming quite a popular resort – not sea-side exactly, for there you are right out in the sea."

"Let us go there," said Mrs. Dinsmore; "I think it would be a pleasant variety to get fairly out into the sea for once, instead of merely alongside of it."

"Oh, yes, do let us go!"

"I'm in favor of it!"

"And I!"

"And I!" cried one and another, while Mr. Dinsmore replied, laughingly, to his wife, "Provided you don't find the waves actually rolling over you, I suppose, my dear. Well, the captain's description is very appetizing so far, but let us hear what more he has to say on the subject."

"Haven't I said enough, sir?" returned the captain, with a good-humored smile. "You will doubtless want to find some things out for yourselves when you get there."

"Are there any mountains, papa?" asked little Grace. "I'd like to see some."

"So you shall, daughter," he said; "but we will have to go elsewhere than to Nantucket to find them."

"No hills either?" she asked.

"Yes, several ranges of not very high hills; Saul's Hills are the highest; then there are bluffs south of 'Sconset known as Sunset Heights; indeed, the village itself stands on a bluff high above the sandy beach, where the great waves come rolling in. And there is 'Tom Never's Head.' Also Nantucket Town is on high ground sloping gradually up from the harbor; and just out of the town, to the north-west, are the Cliffs, where you go to find surf-bathing; in the town itself you must be satisfied with still-bathing. An excellent place, by the way, to teach the children how to swim."

"Then you can teach me, Edward," said Zoe; "I'd like to learn."

"I shall be delighted," he returned, gallantly.

"Papa," asked Max, "are there any woods and streams where one may hunt and fish?"

"Hardly anything to be called woods," the captain answered; "trees of any size are few on the island. Except the shade trees in the town, I think some ragged, stunted pines are all you will find; but there are streams and ponds to fish in, to say nothing of the great ocean. There is some hunting, too, for there are plover on the island."

"Well, shall we go and see for ourselves, as the captain advises?" asked Mr. Dinsmore, addressing the company in general.

Every voice answered in the affirmative, though Elsie, looking doubtfully at Violet, remarked that she feared she was hardly strong enough for so long a journey.

"Ah, that brings me to my second proposition, mother," said Captain Raymond; "that – seeing what a very large company we shall make, especially if we can persuade our friends from Fairview, the Oaks, and the Laurels to accompany us – we charter a yacht and go by sea."

"Oh, captain, what a nice idea!" cried Zoe, clapping her hands. "I love the sea – love to be either beside it or on it."

"I think it would be ever so nice!" Rosie exclaimed. "Oh, grandpa and mamma, do say yes!"

"I shall not oppose it, my dear," Elsie said; "indeed, I think it may perhaps be our best plan. How does it strike you, father?"

"Favorably," he replied, "if we can get the yacht. Do you know of one that might be hired, captain?"

"I do, sir; a very fine one. I have done with it as with the cottage – partially engaged it – feeling pretty sure you would all fall in with my views."

"Captain," cried Zoe, "you're just a splendid man! I know of only one that's more so," with a laughing look at her husband.

The captain bowed his acknowledgments. "As high praise as I could possibly ask, my dear sister. I trust that one may always stand first in your esteem."

"He always will," said Zoe; "but," with another glance, arch and smiling, into Edward's eyes, "don't tell him, lest he should grow conceited and vain."

"Don't tell him, because it would be no news," laughed Edward, gazing with fondness and admiration at the blooming face of the loved flatterer.

The talk went on about the yacht, and before they left the table the captain was empowered to engage her for their use. Also the 'Sconset cottage he had spoken of, and one or two more, if they were to be had.

"You will command the vessel, of course, captain?" several voices said, inquiringly, all speaking at once.

"If chosen commander by a unanimous vote," he said.

"Of course, of course; we'll be only too glad to secure your services," said Mr. Dinsmore, everybody else adding a word of glad assent.

"How soon do we sail, captain?" asked Zoe. "Must we wait for an answer from Nantucket?"

"No; I shall send word by this morning's mail, to Captain Coffin, that we will take his cottage and two others, if he can engage them for us. But there is no time to wait for a reply."

"Can't we telegraph?" asked Violet.

"No; because there is no telegraph from the mainland to the island.

"Now, ladies all, please make your preparations as rapidly as possible. We ought to be off by the first of next week. I can telegraph for the yacht, and she will be ready for us, lying at anchor in our own harbor.

"But, little wife," turning to Violet, with a tenderly affectionate air, "you are not to exert yourself in the least with shopping, sewing, or packing. I positively forbid it," he added, with playful authority.

"That is right, captain," Elsie said, with a pleased smile. "She is not strong enough yet for any such exertion, nor has she any need to make it."

"Ah, mamma," said Violet, "are you not forgetting the lessons you used to give us, your children, on the sin of indolence and self-indulgence?"

"No, daughter; nor those on the duty of doing all in our power for the preservation of health as one of God's good gifts, and to be used in His service."

They were all gathered upon the veranda now in the cool shade of the trees and vines, for the weather was extremely warm.

"I wish we were ready to sail to-day," said Zoe. "How delicious the sea-breeze would be!"

A nice-looking, pleasant-faced colored woman stepped from the doorway with a little bundle in her arms, which she carried to Violet.

The captain, standing beside his wife, bent over her and the babe with a face full of love and delight.

"Isn't she a darling?" whispered Violet, gazing down upon the tiny creature with all a young mother's unspeakable love and pride in her first-born, then up into her husband's face.

"That she is!" he responded; "I never saw a fairer, sweeter babe. I should fear to risk her little life and health in a journey to Nantucket by land; but going by sea will, I think, be more likely to do her good than harm."

"It's all her, her, when you talk about that baby," laughed Rosie; "why don't you call her by her name?"

"So we will, Aunt Rosie, if you will kindly inform us what it is," returned the captain, good-humoredly.

"I, sir!" exclaimed Rosie; "we have all been told again and again that you were to decide upon the name on your arrival; and you've been here – how many hours? – and it seems the poor little dear is nameless yet."

"Apparently not greatly afflicted by it either," said the captain, adopting Rosie's sportive tone. "My love, what do you intend to call your daughter?"

"Whatever her father appoints as her name," returned Vi, laughingly.

"No, no," he said; "you are to name her yourself; you have undoubtedly the best right."

"Thank you; then, if you like, she shall be mamma's namesake; her first granddaughter should be, I think, as the first grandson was papa's."

"I highly approve your choice," he said, with a glance of affectionate admiration directed toward his mother-in-law; "and may a strong resemblance in both looks and character descend to her with the name."

"We will all say amen to that, captain," said Edward.

"Yes, indeed," added Zoe, heartily.

"Thank you both," Elsie said, with a gratified look; "I appreciate the compliment; but if I had the naming of my little granddaughter, she should be another Violet; there is already an Elsie in the family besides myself, you know, and it makes a little confusion to have too many of the same name."

"Then, mamma, we can make a variety by calling this one Else for short," returned Violet, gayly, holding up the babe to receive a caress from its grandmother, who had drawn near, evidently with the purpose of bestowing it.

"What a pretty pet it is!" Elsie said, taking it in her arms and gazing delightedly into the tiny face. "Don't you think so, captain?"

"Of course I do, mother," he said, with a happy laugh. Then, examining its features critically: "I really fancy I see a slight resemblance to you now, which I trust is destined to increase with increasing years. But excuse me, ladies; I must go and write that all-important letter at once, or it will be too late for the mail."

He hurried away to the library, and entering it hastily, but without much noise, for he wore slippers, found Lulu there, leaning moodily out of a window.

She had stolen away from the veranda a moment before, saying to herself, in jealous displeasure, "Such a fuss over that little bit of a thing! I do believe papa is going to care more for it than for any of us, his own children, that he had long before he ever saw Mamma Vi; and it's just too bad."

Knowing Lulu as he did, her father instantly conjectured what was passing in her mind. It grieved and angered him, yet strong affection was mingled with his displeasure, and he silently asked help of God to deal wisely with this child of his love.

He remembered that Lulu was more easily ruled through her affections than in any other way, and as she turned toward him, with a flushed and shamefaced countenance, he went to her, took her in his arms, held her close to his heart, and kissed her tenderly several times.

"My dear, dear little daughter," he said. "How often, when far away on the sea, I have longed to do this – to hold my dear Lulu in my arms and feel hers about my neck and her sweet kisses on my lips."

Her arms were instantly thrown round his neck, while she returned his kisses with interest.

"Papa," she said, "I do love you so, *so* dearly; but I 'most wonder you don't quit loving such a hateful girl as I am."

"Perhaps I might not love an ill-tempered, jealous child belonging to somebody else," he said, as if half in jest, half in earnest; "but you are my own," drawing her closer and repeating his caresses, "my very own; and so I have to love you in spite of everything. But, my little girl," and his tone grew very grave and sad, "if you do not fight determinately against these wrong feelings you will never know rest or happiness in this world or the next."

"But we won't talk any more about it now; I have no time, as I ought to be writing my letter. Run away and make yourself happy, collecting together such toys and books as you would like to carry with you to Nantucket. Grandma Elsie and Mamma Vi will decide what you and the rest will need in the way of clothing."

"I will, papa; and oh, but I think you are good to me!" she said, giving him a final hug and kiss; "a great deal better than I deserve; but I will try to be good."

"Do, my child," he said; "and not in your own strength; God will help you if you ask Him."

For the moment thoroughly ashamed of her jealousy of the baby, she ran back to the veranda, where the others still were, and bending over it as it lay its mother's arms, kissed it several times.

Violet's face flushed with pleasure. "My dear Lulu, I hope you and little Else are going to be very fond of each other," she said.

"I hope so, Mamma Vi," Lulu answered, pleasantly; then, in a sudden fit of penitence, added, "but I'm afraid she'll never learn any good from the example of her oldest sister."

"My dear child, resolve that she shall," said Grandma Elsie, standing by; "you cannot avoid having a good deal of influence over her as she grows older, and do not forget that you will have to give an account for the use you make of it."

"I suppose that's so," Lulu answered, with a little impatient shrug of her shoulders; "but I wish it wasn't." Then, turning abruptly away, "Max and Gracie," she called to her brother and sister, "papa says we may go and gather up any books and toys we want to take with us."

The three ran off together in high glee. The ladies stayed a little longer, deep in consultation about necessary arrangements which must fall to their share: then dispersed to their several apartments, with the exception of Violet, who, forbidden to exert herself, remained where she was till joined by her husband, when he had finished and despatched his letter. It was great happiness to them to be together after their long separation.

Mr. Dinsmore and Edward had walked out into the avenue, and were seated under a tree in earnest conversation.

"Talking tiresome business, I suppose," remarked Zoe, in a half-petulant tone, glancing toward them as she spoke, and apparently addressing Violet, as she was the only other person on the veranda at the moment.

"Yes, no doubt; but we must have patience with them, dear, because it is very necessary," Violet answered, with a smile. "Probably they are discussing the question how the plantation is to be attended to in their absence. You know it won't take care of itself, and the men must have a head to direct their labors."

"Oh yes, of course; and for that reason Ned is kept ever so busy while we are here, and I do think it will be delightful to get away to the seashore with him, where there will be nothing to do but enjoy ourselves."

Zoe skipped away with the last word, ran up to her room, and began turning over the contents of bureau drawers and taking garments from wardrobes and closets, with the view of selecting such as she might deem it desirable to carry with her on the contemplated trip.

She was humming softly a snatch of lively song, feeling very gay and light-hearted, when, coming across a gray travelling-dress a little worse for the wear, her song suddenly ceased, while tears gathered in her eyes, then began to fall drop by drop as she stood gazing down, upon this relic of former days.

"Just one year ago," she murmured. "Papa, papa! I never thought I could live a whole year without you; and be happy, too! Ah, that seems ungrateful, when you were so, so good to me! But no; I am sure you would rather have me happy; and it would be ungrateful to my dear husband if I were not."

She put the dress aside, wiped away her tears, and took down another. It was a dark woollen dress. She had travelled home in it the previous fall, and had worn it once since on a very memorable occasion; her cheek crimsoned at the recollection as she glanced from it to her husband, who entered the room at that instant; then her eyes fell.

"What is it, love?" he asked, coming quickly toward her.

"Nothing, only – you remember the last time you saw me in this dress? Oh, Ned, what a fool I was! and how good you were to me!"

He had her in his arms by this time, and she was hiding her blushing face on his breast. "Never mind, my pet," he said, soothing her with caresses; "it is a secret between ourselves, and always shall be, unless you choose to tell it."

"I? No indeed!" she said, drawing a long breath; "I think I should almost die of mortification if any one else should find it out; but I'm glad you know it, because if you didn't my conscience wouldn't give me a bit of peace till I confessed to you."

"Ah! and would that be very difficult?"

"Yes; I don't know how I could ever find courage to make the attempt."

"Are you really so much afraid of me?" he asked, in a slightly aggrieved tone.

"Yes; for I love you so dearly that your displeasure is perfectly unendurable," she replied, lifting her head to gaze fondly into his eyes.

"Ah, is that it, my darling?" he said, in a glow of delight. "I deem myself a happy man in possessing such a treasure as you and your dear love. I can hardly reconcile myself to the thought of a separation for even a few weeks."

"Separation!" she cried, with a start, and in a tone of mingled pain and incredulity. "What can you mean? But I won't be separated from you; I'm your wife, and I claim the right to cling to you always, *always!*"

"And I would have you do so, if it could be without a sacrifice of your comfort and enjoyment, but –"

"Comfort and enjoyment!" she interrupted; "it is here in your arms or by your side that I find both; nowhere else. But why do you talk so? is anything wrong?"

"Nothing, except that it seems impossible for me to leave the plantation for weeks to come, unless I can get a better substitute than I know of at present."

"Oh, Ned, I am so sorry!" she cried, tears of disappointment springing to her eyes.

"Don't feel too badly about it, little wife," he said, in a cheery tone; "it is just possible the right man may turn up before the yacht sails; and in that case I can go with the rest of you; otherwise I shall hope to join you before your stay at Nantucket is quite over."

"Not my stay; for I won't go one step of the way without you, unless you order me!" she added, sportively, and with a vivid blush; "and I'm not sure that I'll do it even in that case."

"Oh, yes you will," he said, laughingly. "You know you promised to be always good and obedient on condition that I would love you and keep you; and I'm doing both to the very best of my ability."

"But you won't be if you send me away from you. No, no; I have a right to stay with you, and I shall claim it always," she returned, clinging to him as if she feared an immediate separation.

"Foolish child!" he said, with a happy laugh, holding her close; "think what you would lose: the sea voyage in the pleasantest of company –"

"No; the pleasantest company would be left behind if you were," she interrupted.

"Well, very delightful company," he resumed; "then I don't know how many weeks of the oppressive heat here you would have to endure, instead of enjoying the cool, refreshing breezes sweeping over Nantucket. Surely, you cannot give it all up without a sigh?"

"I can't give up the thought of enjoying it all with you without sighing, and crying, too, maybe," she answered, smiling through tears; "but I'd sigh and cry ten times as much if I had to go and leave you behind. No, Mr. Travilla, you needn't indulge the hope of getting rid of me for even a week. I'm determined to stay where you stay, and go only where you go."

"Dreadful fate!" he exclaimed. "Well, little wife, I shall do my best to avert the threatened disappointment of your hopes of a speedy departure out of this heated atmosphere and a delightful sea voyage to that famous island. Now, I must leave you and begin at once my search for a substitute as manager of the plantation."

"Oh, I do hope you will succeed!" she said. "Shall I go on with my packing?"

"Just as you please, my dear; perhaps it would be best; as otherwise you may be hurried with it if we are able to go with the others."

"Then I shall; and I'm determined not to look for disappointment," she said, in a lively, cheery tone, as he left the room,

At the conclusion of his conference with Edward, Mr. Dinsmore sought his daughter in her own apartments. He found her busied much as Zoe was, looking over clothing and selecting what ought to be packed in the trunks a man-servant was bringing in.

She had thrown aside the widow's weeds in which she was wont to array herself when about to leave the seclusion of her own rooms, and donned a simple white morning dress that was very becoming, her father thought.

"Excuse my wrapper, papa," she said, turning toward him a bright, sweet face, as he entered; "I found my black dress oppressive this warm morning."

"Yes," he said; "it is a most unwholesome dress, I think; and for that reason and several others I should be extremely glad if you would give it up entirely."

"Would you, my dear father?" she returned, tears springing to her eyes.

"I should indeed, if it would not involve too great a sacrifice of feeling on your part. I have always thought white the most suitable and becoming dress for you in the summer season, and so did your husband."

"Yes, papa, I remember that he did; but – I – I should be very loath to give the least occasion for any one to say or think he was forgotten by her he loved so dearly, or that she had ceased to mourn his loss."

"Loss, daughter dear?" he said, taking her in his arms to wipe away the tears that were freely coursing down her cheeks, and caress her with exceeding tenderness.

"No, papa, not lost, but only gone before," she answered, a lovely smile suddenly irradiating her features; "nor does he seem far away. I often feel that he is very near me still, though I can neither see nor speak to him nor hear his loved voice," she went on, in a dreamy tone, a far-away look in the soft brown eyes as she stood, with her head on her father's shoulder, his arm encircling her waist.

Both were silent for some moments; then Elsie, lifting her eyes to her father's face, asked, "Were you serious in what you said about my laying aside mourning, papa?"

"Never more so," he answered. "It is a gloomy, unwholesome dress, and I have grown very weary of seeing you wear it. It would be very gratifying to me to see you exchange it for more cheerful attire."

"But black is considered the most suitable dress for old and elderly ladies, papa; and I am a grandmother, you know."

"What of that?" he said, a trifle impatiently; "you do not look old, and are, in fact, just in the prime of life. And it is not like you to be concerned about what people may think or say. Usually your only inquiry is, 'Is it right?' 'Is it what I ought to do?'"

"I fear that is a deserved reproof, papa," she said, with unaffected humility; "and I shall be governed by your wishes in this matter, for they have been law to me almost all my life (a law I have loved to obey, dear father), and I know that if my husband were here he would approve of my decision."

She could not entirely suppress a sigh as she spoke, nor keep the tears from filling her eyes.

Her father saw and appreciated the sacrifice she would make for him.

"Thank you, my darling," he said. "It seems selfish in me to ask it of you, but though partly for my own gratification, it is really still more for your sake; I think the change will be for your health and happiness."

"And I have the highest opinion of my father's wisdom," she said, "and should never, never think of selfishness as connected with him."

Mrs. Dinsmore came in at this moment.

"Ah, my dear," she said, "I was in search of you. What is to be done about Bob and Betty Johnson? You know they will be coming home in a day or two for their summer vacation."

"They can stay at Roselands with their cousins Calhoun and Arthur Conly; or at the Oaks, if Horace and his family do not join us in the trip to Nantucket."

"Cannot Bob and Betty go with us, papa?" Elsie asked. "I have no doubt it would be a very great treat to them."

"Our party promises to be very large," he replied; "but if you two ladies are agreed to invite them I shall raise no objection."

"Shall we not, mamma?" Elsie asked, and Rose gave a hearty assent.

"Now, how much dressmaking has to be done before the family can be ready for the trip?" asked Mr. Dinsmore.

"Very little," the ladies told him, Elsie adding, "At least if you are willing to let me wear black dresses when it is too cool for white, papa. Mamma, he has asked me to lay aside my mourning."

"I knew he intended to," Rose said, "and I think you are a dear good daughter to do it."

"It is nothing new; she has always been the best of daughters," Mr. Dinsmore remarked, with a tenderly affectionate look at Elsie. "And, my dear child, I certainly shall not ask you to stay a day longer than necessary in this hot place, merely to have new dresses made when you have enough even of black ones. We must set sail as soon as possible. Now, I must have a little business chat with you. Don't go, Rose; it is nothing that either of us would care to have you hear."

## CHAPTER II

*"Where the broad ocean leans against the land."*

– *Goldsmith.*

Elsie felt somewhat apprehensive that this early laying aside of her mourning for their father might not meet the approval of her older son and daughters; but it gave them pleasure; one and all were delighted to see her resume the dress of the happy days when he was with them.

Zoe, too, was very much pleased. "Mamma," she said, "you do look so young and lovely in white; and it was so nice in you to begin wearing it again on the anniversary of our wedding-day. Just think, it's a whole year to-day since Edward and I were married. How fast time flies!"

"Yes," Elsie said; "it seems a very little while since I was as young and light-hearted as you are now, and now I am a grandmother."

"But still happy; are you not, mamma? you always seem so to me."

"Yes, my child; I have a very peaceful, happy life. I miss my husband, but I know the separation is only for a short time, and that he is supremely blessed. And with my beloved father and dear children about me, heart and hands are full – delightfully full – leaving no room for sadness and repining." This little talk was on the veranda, as the two stood there for a moment apart from the others. Zoe was looking quite bride-like in a white India mull, much trimmed with rich lace, her fair neck and arms adorned with a set of beautiful pearls, just presented her by Edward in commemoration of the day.

She called Elsie's attention to them. "See, mamma, what my husband has given me in memory of the day. Are they not magnificent?"

"It is a very fine set," Elsie answered, with a smile, glancing admiringly at the jewels and from them to the blooming face of the wearer. "A most suitable gift for his little wife."

"He's so good to me, mamma," Zoe said, with warmth. "I love him better every day we live together, and couldn't think of leaving him behind alone, when you all go off to Nantucket. I do hope he'll be able to find somebody to take his place; but if he isn't I shall stay here with him."

"That is quite right, dear child; I am very glad you love him so dearly," Elsie said, with a very pleased look; "but I hope your affection will not be put to so severe a test; we have heard of a very suitable person, though it is still uncertain whether his services can be secured. We shall probably know to-morrow."

"Perhaps sooner than that," Mr. Dinsmore said, approaching them just in time to hear his daughter's last sentence; "Edward has gone to have an interview with him, and hopes for a definite reply to his proposition. Ah, here he comes now!" as Edward was seen to turn in at the great gates and come up the avenue at a gentle trot. It was too warm for a gallop.

As he drew near he took off his hat and waved it in triumph round his head. "Success, good friends!" he cried, reining in his steed at the veranda steps. Then, as he threw the reins to a servant and sprang to the ground, "Zoe, my darling, you can go on with your packing; we may confidently expect to be able to sail with the rest."

"Oh delightful!" she exclaimed, dancing about as gleefully as if she had been a maiden of eight or ten instead of a woman just closing the first year of her married life.

Everybody sympathized in her joy; everybody was glad that she and Edward were to be of their party.

All the older ones were very busy for the next few days, no one finding time for rest and quiet chat except the captain and Violet, who keenly enjoyed a monopoly of each other's society during not a few hours of every day; Mrs. Dinsmore and Elsie having undertaken to attend to all that would

naturally have fallen to Violet's share in making ready for the summer's jaunt had she been in robust health. Bob and Betty Johnson, to whom the Oaks had been home for many years, and who had just graduated from school, came home in the midst of the bustle of preparation, and were highly delighted by an invitation to join the Nantucket party.

No untoward event occurred to cause disappointment or delay; all were ready in due season, and the yacht set sail at the appointed time, with a full list of passengers, carrying plenty of luggage, and with fair winds and sunny skies.

They were favored with exceptionally fine weather all the way, and seas so smooth that scarce a touch of sea-sickness was felt by any, from the oldest to the youngest.

They entered Nantucket harbor one lovely summer morning, with a delicious breeze blowing from the sea, the waves rippling and dancing in the sunlight, and the pretty town seated like a queen on the surrounding heights that slope gently up from the water.

They were all gathered on deck, eager for a first glimpse of the place.

Most of them spoke admiringly of it, but Zoe said, "It's pretty enough, but too much of a town for me. I'm glad we are not to stay in it. 'Sconset is a smaller place, isn't it, captain?"

"Much smaller," he answered; "quite small enough to suit even so great a lover of solitude as yourself, Mrs. Travilla."

"Oh, you needn't laugh at me," she retorted; "one needn't be a great lover of solitude to care for no more society than is afforded by this crowd. But I want to be close by the bounding sea, and this town is shut off from that by its harbor."

"Where is the harbor, papa?" asked little Grace.

"All around us, my child; we are in it."

"Are we?" she asked, "I think it looks just like the sea; what's the matter with it, Aunt Zoe?"

"Nothing, only it's too quiet; the great waves don't come rolling in and breaking along the shore. I heard your father say so; it's here they have the still bathing."

"Oh, yes, and papa is going to teach us to swim!" exclaimed Lulu; "I'm so glad, for I like to learn how to do everything."

"That's right," her father said, with an approving smile; "learn all you can, for 'knowledge is power.'"

They landed, the gentlemen presently secured a sufficient number of hacks to comfortably accommodate the entire party, and after a cursory view of the town, in a drive through several of its more important streets, they started on the road to 'Sconset.

They found it, though a lonely, by no means an unpleasant, drive – a road marked out only by rows of parallel ruts across wild moorlands, where the ground was level or slightly rolling, with now and then some gentle elevation, or a far-off glimpse of harbor or sea, or a lonely farmhouse. The wastes were treeless, save for the presence of a few stunted jack-pines; but these gave out a sweet scent, mingling pleasantly with the smell of the salt-sea air; and there were wild roses and other flowering shrubs, thistles and tiger-lilies and other wild flowers, beautiful enough to tempt our travellers to alight occasionally to gather them.

'Sconset was reached at length, three adjacent cottages found ready and waiting for their occupancy, and they took possession.

The cottages stood on a high bluff overlooking miles of sea, between which and the foot of the cliff stretched a low sandy beach a hundred yards or more in width, and gained by flights of wooden stairs.

The cottages faced inland, and had each a little back yard, grassy, and showing a few flowers, that reached to within a few yards of the edge of the bluff. The houses were tiny, built low and strong, that they might resist the fierce winds of winter in that exposed position, and shingled all over to keep out the spray from the waves, which would penetrate any other covering.

Dinner was engaged for our entire party at one of the hotels, of which there were two; but as it yet wanted more than an hour of the time set for the meal, all who were not too tired sallied forth to explore the hamlet and its environs.

They found it to consist of about two hundred cottages, similar to those they had engaged for the season, each in a little enclosure. They were built along three narrow streets or lanes running parallel with the edge of the bluff, and stood in groups of twos or threes, separated by narrow cross-lanes, giving every one free access to the town pump, the only source of fresh-water supply in the place.

The children were particularly interested in the cottage of Captain Baxter, with its famous ship's figure-head in the yard.

Back of the original 'Sconset, on the slight ascent toward Nantucket Town, stood a few more pretentious cottages, built as summer residences by the rich men of the island, retired sea captains, and merchants; this was the one broad street, and here were the two hotels, the Atlantic House and the Ocean View House.

Then on the bluff south of the old village, called Sunset Heights, there were some half dozen cottages; a few on the bluff north of it, also.

The town explored and dinner eaten, of course the next thing was to repair to the beach to watch the rush and tumble of the restless waves, fast chasing each other in, and the dash of the spray as they broke along the shore.

There was little else to see, for the bathing hour was long past; but that was quite enough.

Soon, however, nearly every one of the party began to feel unaccountably sleepy. Some returned to the cottages for the indulgence of their desire for slumber, and others, spreading cloaks and shawls upon the sand, enjoyed a delicious rest, warmed by the sun and fanned by the sea breeze.

For a day or two they did little but sleep and eat, and sleep and eat again, enjoying it immensely, too, and growing fat and strong.

After that they woke to new life, made inquiries in regard to all the sights and amusements the island afforded, and began availing themselves of their opportunities, as if it were the business of life.

When it was for a long drive to some notable point, all went together, chartering several vehicles for their conveyance; at other times they not unfrequently broke up into smaller parties, some preferring one sort of sport, some another.

"How many of us are going to bathe to-day?" Mr. Dinsmore asked, the second morning after their arrival.

"I for one, if you will bear me company and look out for my safety," said his wife.

"Most assuredly I will," he answered. "And you too, Elsie?" turning to his daughter.

"Yes, sir," she said, "if you think you can be burdened with the care of two."

"No, mother," spoke up Edward, quickly; "you and Zoe will be my charge, of course."

"Ridiculous, Ned! of course, Harold and I will take care of mamma," exclaimed Herbert. "You will have enough to do to look out for your wife's safety."

(The yacht had touched at Cape May and taken the two college students aboard there.)

"I shall be well taken care of," their mother said, laughingly, with an affectionate glance from one to another of her three tall sons; "but I should like one of you to take charge of Rosie, another of Walter; and, in fact, I don't think I need anything for myself but a strong hold of the rope to insure my safety."

"You shall have more!" exclaimed father and sons in a breath; "the surf is heavy here, and we cannot risk your precious life."

Mr. Dinsmore added, "None of you ladies ought to stay in very long, and we will take you in turn."

"Papa, may I go in?" asked Lulu, eagerly.

"Yes; I'll take you in," the captain answered; "but the waves are so boisterous that I doubt if you will care to repeat the experiment. Max, I see, is waiting his chance to ask the same question,"

he added, with a fatherly smile directed to the boy; "you may go in too, of course, my son, if you will promise to hold on to the rope. I cannot think that otherwise you would be safe in that boiling surf."

"But I can swim, papa," said Max; "and won't you let me go with you out beyond the surf, where the water is more quiet?"

"Why yes, you shall," the captain replied, with a look of pleasure; "I did not know that you had learned to swim."

"I don't want to go in," said timid little Grace, as if half fearful it might be required of her. "Mamma is not going, and can't I stay with her, papa?"

"Certainly, daughter," was the kind reply. "I suppose you feel afraid of those dashing waves, and I should never think of forcing you in among them against your will."

Betty Johnson now announced her intention to join the bathers. "It's the first chance I've ever had," she remarked, "and I shan't throw it away. I'll hold on to the rope, and if I'm in any danger I suppose Bob, or some of the rest of you, will come to my assistance?"

"Of course we will!" all the gentlemen said, her brother adding, "And if there's a good chance, I'll take you over to Nantucket Town, where there's still-bathing, and teach you to swim."

"Just what I should like," she said. "I have a great desire to add that to the already large number of my accomplishments."

Miss Betty was a very lively, in fact, quite wild, young lady, whose great desire was for fun and frolic; to have, as she expressed it, "a jolly good time" wherever she went.

The captain drew out his watch. "About time to don the bathing-suits," he said; "I understand that eleven o'clock is the hour, and it wants but fifteen minutes of it."

Grandma Elsie had kindly seen to it that each little girl – that is, Captain Raymond's two and her own Rosie – was provided with a pretty, neatly-fitting, and becoming bathing dress.

Violet helped Lulu to put her's on, and, surveying her with a smile of gratified motherly pride, told her she looked very well in it, and that she hoped she would enjoy her bath.

"Thank you," said Lulu; "but why don't you go in too, Mamma Vi?"

"Only because I don't feel strong enough to stand up against those heavy waves," Violet answered. "But I am going down to the beach to watch you all, and see that you don't drown," she added, sportively.

"Oh Lu, aren't you afraid to go in?" asked little Grace, half shuddering at the very thought.

"Why no, Gracie; I've bathed in the sea before; I went in a good many times last summer; don't you remember?"

"Yes; but the waves there weren't half so big and strong."

"No; but I'll have a rope and papa, too, to hold to; so why need I be afraid?" laughed Lulu.

"Mamma is, I think," said Grace, looking doubtfully at her.

"Oh no, dear," said Violet; "I should not be at all afraid to go in if I were as strong as usual; but being weak, I know that buffeting with those great waves would do me more harm than good."

Their cottages being so near the beach, our party all assumed their bathing suits before descending to it. They went down, this first time, all in one company, forming quite a procession; Mr. and Mrs. Dinsmore heading it, and Violet and Grace, as mere spectators, bringing up the rear.

They, in common with others who had nothing to do but look on, found it an amusing scene; there was a great variety of costume, some neat, well-fitting, and modest; some quite immodestly scant; some bright and new; some faded and old. There was, however, but little freshness and beauty in any of them when they came out of the water.

Violet and Grace found a seat under an awning. Max came running up to them.

"Papa is going in with Lulu first," he said; "then he will bring her out and take me with him for a swim beyond the breakers. I'll just wait here with you till my turn comes."

"See, see, they're in the water!" cried Grace; "and oh, what a big, big wave that is coming! There, it would have knocked Lulu down if papa hadn't had fast hold of her."

"Yes; it knocked a good many others down," laughed Max; "just hear how they are screeching and screaming."

"But laughing, too," said Violet, "as if they find it fine sport."

"Who is that man sitting on that bench nearest the water, and looking just ready to run and help if anybody needs it?" asked Grace.

"Oh, that's Captain Gorham," said Max. "and to run and help if he's needed is exactly what he's there for. And I presume he always does it; for they say no bather was ever drowned here."

Ten or fifteen minutes later a little dripping figure left the water, and came running toward them.

"Why, it's Lulu," Gracie said, as it drew near, calling out to Max that papa was ready for him.

Max was off like a shot in the direction of the water, and Lulu shouted to her sister, "Oh Gracie, it's such fun! I wish you had gone, too."

Violet hastened to throw a waterproof cloak about Lulu's shoulders, and bade her hurry to the house, rub hard with a coarse towel, and put on dry clothing.

"I will go with you," she added, "if you wish."

"Oh no, thank you, Mamma Vi," Lulu answered, in a lively, happy tone. "I can do it all quite well myself, and it must be fun for you to sit here and watch the bathers."

"Well, dear, rub till you are in a glow," Violet said, as the little girl sped on her way.

"Oh mamma, see, see!" cried Grace, more than half frightened at the sight; "papa has gone away, way out, and Maxie with him. Oh, aren't you afraid they will drown?"

"No, Gracie dear; I think we may safely trust your father's prudence and skill as a swimmer," Violet answered. "Ah, there come Grandma Rose and my mother; but Zoe and Betty seem to be enjoying it too much to leave yet."

"Mamma, let's stay here till our people all come out; papa and Maxie, any way" Grace said, persuasively.

"Yes; we will if you wish," said Violet. "I was just thinking I must go in to see how baby is doing; but here comes Dinah, bringing her to me."

There was no accident that day, and everybody was enthusiastic in praise of the bathing. Zoe and Betty would have liked to stay in the water much longer than their escorts deemed prudent, but yielded to their better judgment.

The next morning there was a division of their forces: the Dinsmores, Mrs. Elsie Travilla, Rosie, and Walter, and the Raymonds taking an early start for Nantucket Town, the others remaining behind to enjoy a repetition of the surf bath at 'Sconset.

The Nantucket party drove directly to the bathing house of the town, and the little girls took their first lesson in swimming. They all thought it "very nice," even Grace soon forgetting her timidity in the quiet water and with her father to take care of her.

After that they went about the town visiting places of note – the Athenaeum, the oldest house, dating back more than a hundred years, no longer habitable, but kept as a relic of olden times, so important that a visit to it is a part of the regular curriculum of the summer sojourner in Nantucket; then to the news-room, where they wrote their names in the "Visitors' Book;" then to the stores to view, among other things, the antique furniture and old crockery on exhibition there and for sale.

Many of these stores, situate in wide, handsome streets, were quite city-like in size and in their display of goods.

Dinner at one of the hotels was next in order; after that a delightful sail on the harbor, then around Brant Point and over the bar out into the sea.

Here the boat new before the wind, dancing and rocking on the waves to the intense delight of the older children; but Gracie was afraid till her father took her in his arms and held her fast, assuring her they were in no danger.

As she had unbounded confidence in "papa's" word, and believed he knew all about the sea, this quieted her fears and made the rest of the sail as thoroughly enjoyable to her as it was to the others.

The drive back to 'Sconset, with the full moon shining on moor and sea, was scarcely less delightful. They reached their cottage home full of enthusiasm over the day's experiences, ready to do ample justice to a substantial supper, and then for a long delicious night's sleep.

## CHAPTER III

*"And I have loved thee, Ocean!"*

Captain Raymond, always an early riser, was out on the bluffs before the sun rose, and in five minutes Max was by his side.

"Ah, my boy, I thought you were sound asleep, and would be for an hour yet," the captain remarked when they had exchanged an affectionate good-morning.

"No, sir, I made up my mind last night that I'd be out in time to see the sun rise right out of the sea," Max said; "and there he is, just peeping above the waves. There, now he's fairly up I and see, papa, what a golden glory he sheds upon the waters; they are almost too bright to look at. Isn't it a fine sight?"

"Yes, well worth the sacrifice of an extra morning nap – at least once in a while."

"You must have seen it a great many times, papa."

"Yes, a great many; but it never loses its attraction for me."

"Oh, look, look, papa!" cried Max; "there's a fisherman going out; he has his dory down on the beach, and is just watching for the right wave to launch it. I never can see the difference in the waves – why one is better than half a dozen others that he lets pass. Can you, sir?"

"No," acknowledged the captain; "but let us watch now and try to make out his secret."

They did watch closely for ten minutes or more, while wave after wave came rushing in and broke along the beach, the fisherman's eyes all the while intent upon them as he stood motionless beside his boat; then suddenly seeming to see the right one – though to the captain and Max it did not look different from many of its neglected predecessors – he gave his dory a vigorous push that sent it out upon the top of that very wave, leaped into the stern, seized his oars, and with a powerful stroke sent the boat out beyond the breakers.

"Bravo!" cried Max, clapping his hands and laughing with delight; "see, papa, how nicely he rides now on the long swells! How I should like to be able to manage a boat like that. May I learn if I have the chance?"

"Yes," said his father; "I should like to have you a proficient in all manly accomplishments, only don't be foolhardy and run useless risks. I want my son to be brave, but not rash; ready to meet danger with coolness and courage when duty calls, and to have the proper training to enable him to do so intelligently, but not to rush recklessly into it to no good end."

"Yes, papa," Max answered; "I mean to try to be just such a man as my father is; but do you mean that I may take lessons in managing a boat on the sea, if I can find somebody to teach me?"

"I do; I shall inquire about among the fishermen and see who is capable and willing for the task. Come, let us go down to the beach; we shall have abundance of time for a stroll before breakfast."

At that moment Lulu joined them with a gay good-morning to each; she was in a happy mood. "Oh, what a lovely morning! what a delightful place this is!" she cried. "Papa, can't we take a walk?"

"Yes, Max and I were about starting for one, and shall be pleased to have your company."

"I'd like to go to Tom Never's Head, papa," said Max.

"Oh, so should I!" cried Lulu.

"I believe they call the distance from here about two miles," remarked the captain reflectively; "but such a walk before breakfast in this bracing air I presume will not damage children as strong and healthy as these two of mine," regarding them with a fond, fatherly smile. "So come along, we will try it."

He took Lulu's hand, and the three wended their way southward along Sunset Heights, greatly enjoying the sight of the ocean, its waves glittering and dancing in the brilliant sunlight, their booming sound as they broke along the beach and the exhilarating breeze blowing fresh and pure from them.

"This is a very dangerous coast," the captain remarked, "especially in winter, when it is visited by fierce gales; a great many vessels have been wrecked on Nantucket coast."

"Yes, papa," said Max; "I heard a story the other day of a ship that was wrecked the night before Christmas, eight or ten years ago, on this shore. Nobody knew that a ship was near until the next morning, when pieces of wreck, floating barrels, and dead bodies were cast up on the beach.

"They found that one man had got to land alive; they knew it because he was quite a distance from the beach, though entirely dead when they found him. You see there was just one farmhouse in sight from the scene of the disaster, and they had alight that night because somebody was sick; and they supposed the man saw the light and tried to reach it, but was too much exhausted by fatigue and the dreadful cold, for it seemed his clothes had all been torn off him by the waves; he was stark naked when found, and lying on the ground, which showed that he had struggled hard to get up after falling down upon it.

"I think they said the ship was called the Isaac Newton, was loaded with barrels of coal-oil, and bound for Holland."

"What a terrible death!" Lulu said with a shudder, and clinging more tightly to her father's hand; "every one drowned and may be half frozen for hours before they died. Oh, papa, I wish you didn't belong to the navy, but lived all the time on land! I am so afraid your ship will be wrecked some time," she ended with a sob.

"It is not only upon the water that people die by what we call accident, daughter," the captain answered; "many horrible deaths occur on land – many to which drowning would in my opinion be far preferable.

"But you must remember that we are under God's care and protection everywhere, on land and on sea; and that if we are His children no real evil can befall us. I am very glad you love me, my child, but I would not have you make yourself unhappy with useless fears on my account. Trust the Lord for me and all whom you love."

They pressed onward and presently came upon a lovely lakelet near the beach, as clear as crystal and with bushes with dark green foliage growing on all sides but that toward the sea.

They stopped for a moment to gaze upon it with surprise and admiration, then pushed on again till the top of the high bluff known as Tom Never's Head was reached.

They stood upon its brink and looked off westward and northward over the heaving, tumbling ocean, as far as the eye could reach to the line where sea and sky seemed to meet, taking in long draughts of the pure, invigorating air, and listening to the roar of the breakers below.

"What is that down there?" asked Lulu.

"Part of a wreck, evidently," answered her father; "it must have been there a long while, it is so deeply imbedded in the sand."

"I wish I knew its story," said Lulu; "I hope everybody wasn't drowned when it was lost."

"It must have happened years ago, before that life-saving station was built," remarked Max.

"Life-saving station," repeated Lulu, turning to look in the direction of his glance; "what's that?"

"Do you not know what that means?" asked her father. "It is high time you did. Those small houses are built here and there all along our coast by the general government, for the purpose of accommodating each a band of surf-men, who are employed by the government to keep a lookout for vessels in distress, and give them all the aid in their power.

"They are provided with lifeboats, buoys, and other necessary things to enable them to do so successfully. If it were not too near breakfast time I should take you over there to see their apparatus; but we must defer it to some other day, which will be quite as well, for then we may bring a larger party with us. Now for home," he added, again taking Lulu's hand; "if your appetites are as keen as mine you will be glad to get there and to the table."

"Two good hours to bathing-time," remarked Mr. Dinsmore, consulting his watch as they rose from the breakfast table. "I propose that we utilize them in a visit to Sankaty lighthouse."

All were well satisfied to do so, and presently they set off, some driving, others walking, for the distance is not great, and even feeble folk often find themselves able to take quite long tramps in the bracing sea air.

Max and Lulu preferred to walk when they learned that their father intended doing so; then Grace, though extremely fond of driving, begged leave to join their party, and the captain finally granted her request, thinking within himself that he could carry her if her strength gave out.

The little face grew radiant with delight.

"Oh, you are a nice, good papa!" she cried, giving him a hug and kiss, for he was seated with her upon his knee.

"I am glad you think so," he said, laughingly, as he returned her caress. "Well, as soon as I have helped your mamma into the carriage we will start."

They set out presently, Grace holding fast to one of his hands while Lulu had the other, and tripping gayly along by his side till, passing out of the village, they struck into the narrow path leading to Sankaty; then the little maid moved along more soberly, looking far away over the rolling billows and watching the progress of some vessels in the offing.

They could hear the dash of the waves on the beach below, but could not see it for the overhanging cliffs, the path running some yards distant from their brink.

"I want to see where the waves come up," said Lulu; "there's Max looking down over the edge; can't we go and look too, papa?"

"Yes, with me along to take care of you," he said, turning from the path and leading them seaward; "but don't venture alone, the ground might crumble under your feet and you would have a terrible fall, going down many feet right into the sea."

They had reached the brink. Grace, clinging tightly to her father's hand, took one timid peep, then drew back in terror. "Oh, papa, how far down it is!" she exclaimed. "Oh, let's get away, for fear the ground will break and let us fall."

"Pooh! Gracie, don't be such a coward," said Lulu. "I shouldn't be afraid even if papa hadn't hold of our hands."

"I should be afraid for you, Lulu, so venturesome as you are," said the captain, drawing her a little farther back. "Max, my son, be careful."

"Yes, sir, I will. Papa, do you know how high this bluff is?"

"They say the bank is eighty-five feet high where the lighthouse stands, and I presume it is about the same here. Now, children, we will walk on."

Grace's strength held out wonderfully; she insisted she was not at all tired, even when the end of their walk was reached.

The other division of the party had arrived some minutes before, and several were already making the ascent to the top of the lighthouse tower; the rest were scattered, waiting their turn in the neat parlor of the keeper's snug little home, or wandering over the grassy expanse between it and the sea.

"There are Grandma Elsie and mamma in the house," cried Grace, catching sight of them through a window.

"Yes," said her father, "we will go in there and wait our turn with them," leading the way as he spoke. "Do you want to go up into the tower, Gracie?"

"Oh no, no, papa!" she cried, "what would be the use? and I am afraid I might fall."

"What, with your big strong father to hold you fast?" he asked laughingly, sitting down and drawing her to a seat upon his knee; for they had entered the parlor.

"It might tire you to hold me so hard; I'm getting so big now," she answered naïvely, looking up into his face with a loving smile and stealing an arm about his neck.

"Ah, no danger of that," he laughed. "Why, I believe I could hold even your mamma or Lulu, and that against their will, without being greatly exhausted by the exertion."

"My dear," turning to Violet, "shall I have the pleasure of helping you up to the top of the tower?"

"Thank you, I think I shall not try it to-day," she answered; "they tell me the steps are very steep and hard to climb."

"Ah, so I suppose, and I think you are wise not to attempt it."

"But I may, mayn't I, papa?" Lulu said. "You know I always like to go everywhere."

"I fear it will be a hard climb for a girl of your size," he answered doubtfully.

"Oh, but I want to go, and I don't care if it is a hard climb," she said coaxingly, coming close to his side and laying her hand on his shoulder. "Please, papa, do say I may."

"Yes, since you are so desirous," he said, in an indulgent tone.

Max came hurrying in. "We can go up now, papa," he said; "the others have come down."

Edward and Zoe were just behind the boy. "Oh, you ought all to go up," cried the latter; "the view's just splendid."

"Mother," said Edward, "the view is very fine, but there are sixty steps, each a foot high; a pretty hard climb for a lady, I should think. Will you go up? may I have the pleasure of helping you?"

"Yes," she answered; "I am quite strong and well, and think the view will probably pay for the exertion."

They took the lead, the captain following with Lulu, and Max bringing up the rear.

Having reached the top and viewed the great light (one of the finest on the coast) from the interior, Elsie stepped outside, and holding fast to Edward's hand made the entire circuit, enjoying the extended view on all sides.

Stepping in again, she drew a long breath of relief. "I should not like to try that in a strong wind," she said, "or at all if I were easily made dizzy; no, nor in any case without a strong arm to cling to for safety; for there is plenty of space to fall through between the iron railing and the masonry."

"I should tremble to see you try it alone, mother," Edward said.

"It is a trifle dangerous," acknowledged the keeper.

"Yet safe enough for a sailor," laughed the captain, stepping out.

"Oh, papa, let me go too, please do!" pleaded Lulu.

"Why should you care to?" asked her father.

"To see the prospect, papa; oh, do let me! there can't be any danger with you to hold me tight."

For answer he leaned down and helped her up the step, then led her slowly round, giving her time to take in all the beauties of the scene, taking care of Max too, who was slowly following.

"I presume you are a little careful whom you allow to make that round?" the captain observed inquiringly to the keeper when again they stood inside.

"Yes, and we have never had an accident; but I don't know but there was a narrow escape from it the other day.

"Of course crowds of people come here almost every day while summer visitors are on the island, and we can't always judge what kind they are; but we know it is not an uncommon thing for people standing on the brink of a precipice or any height to feel an uncontrollable inclination to throw themselves down it, and therefore we are on the watch.

"Well, the other day I let a strange woman out there, but presently when I saw her looking down over the edge and heard her mutter to herself, 'Shall I know him when I see him? shall I know him when I see him?' I pulled her inside in a hurry."

"You thought she was deranged and about to commit suicide by precipitating herself to the ground?" Edward said inquiringly.

"Exactly, sir," returned the keeper.

All of their number who wished to do so having visited the top of the tower, our party prepared to leave.

"Are you going to walk back, papa? Mayn't I go with you?" pleaded Grace.

"No, daughter, we must not try your strength too far," he said, lifting her into the carriage where Grandma Elsie and Violet were already seated. "I am going on a mile further to Sachacha Pond, ladies," he remarked; "will you drive there, or directly home?"

"There, if there is time to go and return before the bathing hour," they answered.

"Quite. I think," he replied, and the carriage moved on, he with Max and Lulu, and several of the young gentlemen of the company following on foot.

Sachacha Pond they found to be a pretty sheet of water only slightly salt, a mile long and three quarters of a mile wide, separated from the ocean by a long narrow strip of sandy beach. No stream enters it, but it is the reservoir of the rainfall from the low-lying hills sloping down to its shores.

Quidnet – a hamlet of perhaps a half dozen houses – stands on its banks.

It is to this pond people go to fish for perch; calling it fresh-water fishing; here too they "bob" for eels.

Our party had not come to fish this time, yet had an errand aside from a desire to see the spot – namely, to make arrangements for going sharking the next day.

Driving and walking on to Quidnet they soon found an old, experienced mariner who possessed a suitable boat and was well pleased to undertake the job of carrying their party out to the sharking grounds on the shoals. He would need a crew of two men, easily to be found among his neighbors, he said; he would also provide the necessary tackle. The bait would be perch, which they would catch here in the pond before setting out for the trip by sea to their destination – about a mile away.

Mr. Dinsmore, his three grandsons, and Bob Johnson were all to be of the party. Max was longing to go too, but hardly thought he would be allowed; he was hesitating whether to make the request when his father, catching his eager, wistful look, suddenly asked, "Would you like to go, Max?"

"Oh, yes, papa, yes, indeed!" was the eager response, and the boy's heart bounded with delight at the answer, in a kindly indulgent tone, "Very well, you may."

Lulu, hearing it, cried out, "Oh, couldn't I go too, papa?"

"You? a little girl?" her father said, turning an astonished look upon her; "absurd! no, of course you can't."

"I think I might," persisted Lulu; "I've heard that ladies go sometimes, and I shouldn't be a bit afraid or get in anybody's way."

"You can't go, so let me hear no more about it," the captain answered decidedly as they turned toward home, the arrangements for the morrow's expedition being completed.

"Wouldn't Lulu like to ride?" Violet asked, speaking from the carriage window; "she has already done a good deal of walking to-day."

The carriage stopped, and the captain picked Lulu up and put her in it without waiting for her to reply, for he saw that she was sulking over his refusal of her request.

She continued silent during the short drive to the cottage, and scarcely spoke while hurriedly dressing for the surf-bath.

The contemplated sharking expedition was the chief topic of conversation at the dinner-table, and it was quite evident that those who were going looked forward to a good deal of sport.

The frown on Lulu's face grew darker as she listened. Why should not she have a share in the fun as well as Max? she was sure she was quite as brave, and not any more likely to be seasick; and papa ought to be as willing to give enjoyment to his daughter as to his son.

She presently slipped away to the beach and sat down alone to brood over it, nursing her ill-humor and missing much enjoyment which she might have had because this – a very doubtful one at the best – was denied her.

Looking round after a while, and seeing her father sitting alone on a bench at some little distance, she went to him and asked, "Why can't I go with you to-morrow, papa? I don't see why I can't as well as Max."

"Max is a boy and you are a girl, which makes a vast difference whether you see it or not," the captain answered. "But I told you to let me hear no more about it. I am astonished at your assurance in approaching me again on the subject."

Lulu was silent for a moment, then said complainingly, "And I suppose I'll not be allowed to take my bath either?"

"I don't forbid you," the captain said kindly, putting his arm about her and drawing her in between his knees; "provided you promise to keep fast hold of the rope all the time you are in. With that, and Captain Gorham keeping close watch, you will not be in much danger, I think; but I should be much easier in mind – it would give me great satisfaction – if my little girl would voluntarily relinquish the bath for this one day that I shall not be here to take care of her, for possibly she might be swept away, and it would be a terrible thing to me to lose her."

"I 'most wonder you don't say a good thing, papa, I'm so often naughty and troublesome," she said, suddenly becoming humble and penitent.

"No, it would not be true; your naughtiness often pains me deeply, but I must continue to love my own child in spite of it all," he responded, bending down and imprinting a kiss upon her lips.

"And I love you, papa; indeed, indeed I do," she said, with her arm round his neck, her cheek pressed close to his; "and I won't go in to-morrow; I'm glad to promise not to if it will make you feel easier and enjoy your day more."

"Thank you, my dear child," he said. "I have not the least doubt of your affection."

Edward had spread a rug on the sand just high enough on the beach to be out of reach of the incoming waves, and Zoe, with a book in her hand, was half reclining upon it, resting on her elbow and gazing far out over the waters.

"Well, Mrs. Travilla, for once I find you alone. What has become of your other half?" said a lively voice at her side.

"Oh, is it you, Betty?" Zoe exclaimed, quickly turning her head and glancing up at the speaker.

"No one else, I assure you," returned the lively girl, dropping down on the sand and folding her hands in her lap. "Where did you say Ned is?"

"I didn't say; but he has gone to help mamma down with her shawls and so forth."

"He's the best of sons as well as of husbands," remarked Betty; "but I'm glad he's away for a moment just now, as I want a private word with you. Don't you think it is just a trifle mean and selfish for all our gentlemen to be going off on a pleasure excursion without so much as asking if one of us would like to accompany them?"

"I hadn't thought anything about it," replied Zoe.

"Well, think now, if you please; wouldn't you go if you had an invitation? Don't you want to go?"

"Yes, if it's the proper thing; I'd like to go everywhere with my husband. I'll ask him about it. Here he comes, mamma with him."

She waited till the two were comfortably settled by her side, then said, with her most insinuating smile, "I'd like to go sharking, Ned; won't you take me along to-morrow?"

"Why, what an idea, little wife!" he exclaimed in surprise. "I really hate to say no to any request of yours, but I do not think it would be entirely safe for you. We are not going on the comparatively quiet waters of the harbor, but out into the ocean itself, and that in a whaleboat, and we may have very rough sailing; besides, it is not at all impossible that a man-eating shark might get into the boat alive, and, as I heard an old fisherman say yesterday, 'make ugly work.'"

"Then I don't want to go," Zoe said, "and I'd rather you wouldn't; just suppose you should get a bite?"

"Oh, no danger!" laughed Edward; "a man is better able to take care of himself than a woman is of herself."

"Pooh!" exclaimed Betty; "I don't believe any such thing, and I want to go; I want to be able to say I've done and seen everything other summer visitors do and see on this island."

"Only a foolish reason, is it not, Betty?" mildly remonstrated her Cousin Elsie. "But you will have to ask my father's consent, as he is your guardian."

"No use whatever," remarked Bob, who had joined them a moment before; "I know uncle well enough to be able to tell you that beforehand. Aren't you equally sure of the result of such an application, Ned?"

"Yes."

"Besides," pursued Bob, teasingly, "there wouldn't be room in the boat for a fine lady like my sister Betty, with her flounces and furbelows; also you'd likely get awfully sick with the rolling and pitching of the boat, and leaning over the side for the purpose of depositing your breakfast in the sea, tumble in among the sharks and give them one."

"Oh, you horrid fellow!" she exclaimed, half angrily; "I shouldn't do anything of the kind; I should wear no furbelows, be no more likely to an attack of sea-sickness than yourself, and could get out of the way of a shark quite as nimbly as any one else."

"Well, go and ask uncle," he laughed.

Betty made no move to go; she knew as well as he how Mr. Dinsmore would treat such a request.

The weather the next morning was all that could be desired for sharking, and the gentlemen set off in due time, all in fine spirits.

They were absent all day, returning early in the evening quite elated with their success.

Max had a wonderful tale to tell Lulu and Grace of "papa's" skill, the number of sand-sharks and the tremendous "blue dog" or man-eater he had taken. The captain was not half so proud of his success as was his admiring son.

"I thought all the sharks were man-eaters," said Lulu.

"No, the sand-sharks are not."

"Did everybody catch a man-eater?"

"No; nobody but papa took a full-grown one. Grandpa Dinsmore and Uncle Edward each caught a baby one, and all of them took big fellows of the other kind. I suppose they are the most common, and it's a good thing, because of course they are not nearly so dangerous."

"How many did you catch, Maxie?" asked Grace.

"I? Oh, I helped catch the perch for bait; but I didn't try for sharks, for of course a boy wouldn't be strong enough to haul such big fellows in. I tell you the men had a hard tug, especially with the blue-dog.

"The sand-sharks they killed when they'd got 'em close up to the gunwale by pounding them on the nose with a club – a good many hard whacks it took, too; but the blue-dog had to be stabbed with a lance; and I should think it took considerable courage and skill to do it, with such a big, strong, wicked-looking fellow. You just ought to have seen how he rolled over and over in the water and lashed it into a foam with his tail, how angry his eyes looked, and how he showed his sharp white teeth. I thought once he'd be right in among us the next minute, but he didn't; they got the lance down his throat just in time to put a stop to that."

"Oh, I'm so glad he didn't!" Grace said, drawing a long breath. "Do they eat sharks, Maxie?"

"No, indeed; who'd want to eat a fish that maybe had grown fat on human flesh?"

"What do they kill them for, then?"

"Oh, to rid the seas of them, I suppose, and because there is a valuable oil in their livers. We saw our fellows towed ashore and cut open and their livers taken out."

## CHAPTER IV

*"There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." —Acts 4: 12.*

It was down on the beach Max had been telling his story; the evening was beautiful, warm enough to make the breeze from the sea extremely enjoyable, and the whole family party were gathered there, some sitting upon the benches or camp-chairs, others on rugs and shawls spread upon the sand.

Max seemed to have finished what he had to say about the day's exploits, and Gracie rose and went to her father's side.

He drew her to his knee with a slight caress. "What has my little girl been doing all day?"

"Playing in the sand most of the time, papa. I'm so glad those horrid sharks didn't get a chance to bite you or anybody to-day. Such big, dreadful-looking creatures Maxie says they were."

"Not half so large as some I have seen in other parts of the world."

"Oh, papa, will you tell us about them? Shall I call Max and Lulu to hear it?"

"Yes; if they wish to come, they may."

There was scarcely anything the children liked better than to hear the captain tell of his experiences at sea, and in another moment his own three, Rosie, Walter, and several of the older people were gathered around him, expecting quite a treat.

"Quite an audience," he remarked, "and I'm afraid I shall disappoint you all, for I have no yarn to spin, only a few items of information to give in regard to other varieties of sharks than are to be found on this coast.

"The white shark, found in the Mediterranean and the seas of many of the warmer parts of the world, is the largest and the most feared of any of the monsters of the deep. One has been caught which was thirty-seven feet long. It has a hard skin, is grayish-brown above and whitish on the under side. It has a large head and a big wide mouth armed with a terrible apparatus of teeth – six rows in the upper jaw, and four in the lower."

"Did you ever see one, papa?" asked Grace, shuddering.

"Yes, many a one. They will often follow a ship to feed on any animal matter that may be thrown or fall overboard, and have not unfrequently followed mine, to the no small disturbance of the sailors, who have a superstitious belief that it augurs a death on board during the voyage."

"Do you believe it, captain?" queried little Walter.

"No, my boy, certainly not; how should a fish know what is about to happen? Do you think God would give them a knowledge of the future which He conceals from men? No, it is a very foolish idea which only an ignorant, superstitious person could for a moment entertain. Sharks follow the ships simply because of what is occasionally thrown into the water. They are voracious creatures, and sometimes swallow articles which even their stomachs cannot digest. A lady's work-box was found in one, and the papers of a slave-ship in another."

"Why, how could he get them?" asked Walter.

"They had been thrown overboard," said the captain.

"Do those big sharks bite people?" pursued the child.

"Yes, indeed; they will not only bite off an arm or leg when an opportunity offers, but have been known to swallow a man whole."

"A worse fate than that of the prophet Jonah," remarked Betty. "Do the sailors ever attempt to catch them, captain?"

"Sometimes; using a piece of meat as bait, putting it on a very large hook attached to a chain; for a shark's teeth find no difficulty in going through a rope. But when they have hooked him and

hauled him on board they have need to be very careful to keep out of reach of both his teeth and his tail; they usually rid themselves of danger from the latter by a sailor springing forward and cutting it above the fin with a hatchet.

"In the South Sea Islands they have a curious way of catching sharks by setting a log of wood afloat with a rope attached, a noose at the end of it; the sharks gather round the log, apparently out of curiosity, and one or another is apt soon to get his head into the noose, and is finally wearied out by the log."

"I think that's a good plan," said Grace, "because it doesn't put anybody in danger of being bitten."

No one spoke again for a moment, then the silence was broken by the sweet voice of Mrs. Elsie Travilla: "To-morrow is Sunday; does any one know whether any service will be held here?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Dinsmore; "there will be preaching in the parlors of one of the hotels, and I move that we attend in a body."

The motion was seconded and carried, and when the time came nearly every one went. The service occupied an hour; after that almost everybody sought the beach; but though some went into the surf – doubtless looking upon it as a hygienic measure, therefore lawful even on the Lord's day – there was not the usual boisterous fun and frolic.

Harold, by some manoeuvring, got his mother to himself for a time, making a comfortable seat for her in the sand, and shading her from the sun with an umbrella.

"Mamma," he said, "I want a good talk with you; there are some questions, quite suitable for Sunday, that I want to ask. And see," holding them up to view, "I have brought my Bible and a small concordance with me, for I know you always refer to the Law and to the Testimony in deciding matters of faith and practice."

"Yes," she said, "God's Word is the only infallible rule of faith and practice. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness!"

"Yes, mamma, I have the reference here; Second Timothy, third chapter, and sixteenth verse. And should not the next verse, 'That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,' stir us up to much careful study of the Bible?"

"Certainly, my dear boy; and, oh what cause for gratitude that we have an infallible instructor and guide! But what did you want to ask me?"

"A question that was put to me by one of our fellows at college, and which I was not prepared to answer. The substance of it was this: 'If one who has lived for years in the service of God should be suddenly cut off while committing some sin, would he not be saved, because of his former good works?'"

"Is any son or daughter of Adam saved by good works?" she asked, with a look and tone of surprise.

"No, mother, certainly not; how strange that I did not think of answering him with that query. But he maintained that God was too just to overlook – make no account of – years of holy living because of perhaps a momentary fall into sin."

"We have nothing to hope from God's justice," she replied, "for it wholly condemns us. 'There is none righteous, no, not one. . . . Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight.'"

"But your friend's question is very plainly answered by the prophet Ezekiel," opening her Bible as she spoke. "Here it is, in the eighteenth chapter, twenty-fourth verse.

"'But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.'"

"Nothing could be plainer," Harold said. "I shall refer my friend to that passage for his answer, and also remind him that no one can be saved by works.

"Now, mamma, there is something else. I have become acquainted with a young Jew who interests me greatly. He is gentlemanly, refined, educated, very intelligent and devout, studying the Hebrew Scriptures constantly, and looking for a Saviour yet to come.

"I have felt so sorry for him that I could not refrain from talking to him of Jesus of Nazareth, and trying to convince him that He was and is the true Messiah."

Elsie looked deeply interested. "And what was the result of your efforts?" she asked.

"I have not succeeded in convincing him yet, mamma, but I think I have raised doubts in his mind. I have called his attention to the prophecies in his own Hebrew Scriptures in regard to both the character of the Messiah and the time of His appearing, and shown him how exactly they were all fulfilled in our Saviour. I think he cannot help seeing that it is so, yet tries hard to shut his eyes to the truth.

"He tells me he believes Jesus was a good man and a great prophet, but not the Messiah; only a human creature. To that I answer, 'He claimed to be God, saying, "I and My Father are One;" "Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was I am;" and allowed himself to be worshipped as God; therefore either He was God or He was a wretched impostor, not even a good man.'

"But, mamma, I have been asked by another, a professed Christian, 'Why do you trouble yourself about the belief of a devout Jew? he is not seeking salvation by works, but by faith; then is he not safe, even though he looks for a Saviour yet to come?' How should you answer that question, mamma?"

"With the eleventh and twelfth verses of the fourth chapter of Acts: 'This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.'

"That name is the name of Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified One. He is the only Saviour. We speak – the Bible speaks of being saved by faith, but faith is only the hand with which we lay hold on Christ.

"'A Saviour yet to come?' There is none; and will faith in a myth save the soul? No; nor in any other than Him who is the Door, the Way, the Truth, the Life.

"'He is mighty to save,' and He alone; He Himself said, 'No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.'

"And is it not for the very sin of rejecting their true Messiah, killing Him and imprecating His blood upon them and on their children, that they have been scattered among the nations and have become a hissing and a byword to all people?"

"True, mamma, and yet are they not still God's own chosen people? Are there not promises of their future restoration?"

"Yes, many, in both the Old Testament and the New. Zechariah tells us, 'They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born;' and Paul speaks of a time when the veil that is upon their hearts shall be taken away, and it shall turn to the Lord.

"Let me read you the first five verses of the sixty-second chapter of Isaiah – they are so beautiful.

"'For Zion's sake will I not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

"'And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name which the mouth of the Lord shall name.

"'Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

"Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighted in thee, and thy land shall be married.

"For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee."

Mr. and Mrs. Dinsmore sat together not many paces distant, each with a book; but hers was half closed while she gazed out over the sea.

"I am charmed with the quiet of this place," she remarked presently; "never a scream of a locomotive to break it, no pavements to echo to the footsteps of the passer-by, no sound of factory or mill, or rumble of wheels, scarcely anything to be heard, even on week-days, but the thunder of the surf and occasionally a human voice."

"Except the blast of Captain Baxter's tin horn announcing his arrival with the mail, or warning you that he will be off for Nantucket in precisely five minutes, so that if you have letters or errands for him you must make all haste to hand them over," Mr. Dinsmore said, with a smile.

"Ah, yes," she assented; "but with all that, is it not the quietest place you ever were in?"

"I think it is; there is a delightful Sabbath stillness to-day. I cannot say that I should desire to pass my life here, but a sojourn of some weeks is a very pleasant and restful variety."

"I find it so," said his wife, "and feel a strong inclination to be down here, close by the waves, almost all the time. If agreeable to the rest of our party, let us pass the evening here in singing hymns."

"A very good suggestion," he responded, and Elsie and the others being of the same opinion, it was duly carried out.

## CHAPTER V

*"Sudden they see from midst of all the main  
The surging waters like a mountain rise,  
And the great sea, puff'd up with proud disdain  
To swell above the measure of his guise,  
As threatening to devour all that his power despise."*

– Spenser.

What with bathing, driving, and wandering about on foot over the lovely moors, time flew fast to our 'Sconseters.

It was their purpose to visit every point of interest on the island, and to try all its typical amusements. They made frequent visits to Nantucket Town, particularly that the children might take their swimming lessons in the quiet water of its harbor; also repeated such drives and rambles as they found exceptionably enjoyable.

Max wanted to try camping out for a few weeks in company with Harold and Herbert Travilla and Bob Johnson, but preferred to wait until his father should leave them, not feeling willing to miss the rare pleasure of his society. And the other lads, quite fond of the captain themselves, did not object to waiting.

In the mean time they went blue-fishing (trying it by both accepted modes – the "heave and haul" from a rowboat or at anchor, and trolling from a yacht under full sail), hunting, eel-bobbing, and perch-fishing.

The ladies sometimes went with them on their fishing excursions; Zoe and Betty oftener than any of the others. Lulu went, too, whenever she was permitted, which was usually when her father made one of the party.

"We haven't been on a 'squantum' yet," remarked Betty, one evening, addressing the company in general; "suppose we try that to-morrow."

"Suppose you first tell us what a 'squantum' is," said Mrs. Dinsmore.

"Oh, Aunt Rose, don't you know that that is the Nantucket name for a picnic?"

"I acknowledge my ignorance," laughed the older lady; "I did not know it till this moment."

"Well, auntie, it's one of those typical things that every conscientious summer visitor here feels called upon to do as a regular part of the Nantucket curriculum. How many of us are agreed to go?" glancing about from one to another.

Not a dissenting voice was raised, and Betty proceeded to unfold her plans. Vehicles sufficient for the transportation of the whole party were to be provided, baskets of provisions also; they would take an early start, drive to some pleasant spot near the beach or one of the ponds, and make a day of it – sailing, or rather rowing about the pond, fishing in it, cooking and eating what they caught (fish were said to be so delicious just out of the water and cooked over the coals in the open air), and lounging on the grass, drinking in at the same time the sweet, pure air and the beauties of nature as seen upon Nantucket moors and hills, and in glimpses of the surrounding sea.

"Really, Betty, you grow quite eloquent," laughed her brother;

"Nantucket has inspired you."

"I think it sounds ever so nice," said little Grace. "Won't you go and take us, papa?"

"Yes, if Mamma Vi will go along," he answered, with an affectionate look at his young wife; "we can't go without her, can we, Gracie?"

"Oh, no, indeed! but you will go, mamma, won't you?"

"If your papa chooses to take me," Violet said, in a sprightly tone. "I think it would be very pleasant, but I cannot either go or stay unless he does; for I am quite resolved to spend every one of the few days he will be here, close at his side."

"And as all the rest of us desire the pleasure of his company," said her mother, "his decision must guide ours."

"There, now, captain," cried Betty, "you see it all rests with you; so please say yes, and let us begin our preparations."

"Yes, Miss Betty; I certainly cannot be so gallant as to refuse such a request from such a quarter, especially when I see that all interested in the decision hope I will not."

That settled the matter. Preparations were at once set on foot: the young men started in search of the necessary conveyances, the ladies ordered the provisions, inquiries were made in regard to different localities, and a spot on the banks of Sachacha Pond, where stood a small deserted old house, was selected as their objective point.

They started directly after breakfast, and had a delightful drive over the moors and fenceless fields, around the hills and tiny emerald lakes bordered with beautiful wild shrubbery, bright with golden rod, wild roses, and field lilies. Here and there among the heather grew creeping mealberry vines, with bright red fruit-like beads, and huckleberry bushes that tempted our pleasure-seekers to alight again and again to gather and eat of their fruit.

Everybody was in most amiable mood, and the male members of the party indulgently assisted the ladies, and lifted the children in and out that they might gather floral treasures for themselves, or alighted to gather for them again and again.

At length they reached their destination, left their conveyances, spread an awning above the green grass that grew luxuriantly about the old house, deposited their baskets of provisions and extra wraps underneath it, put the horses into a barn near at hand, and strolled down to the pond.

A whaleboat, large enough to hold the entire company, was presently hired; all embarked; it moved slowly out into the lake; all who cared to fish were supplied with tackle and bait, and the sport began.

Elsie, Violet, and Grace declined to take part in it, but Zoe, Betty, and Lulu were very eager and excited, sending forth shouts of triumph or of merriment as they drew one victim after another from the water; for the fish seemed eager to take the bait, and were caught in such numbers that soon the word was given that quite enough were now on hand, and the boat was headed for the shore.

A fire was made in the sand, and while some broiled the fish and made coffee, others spread a snowy cloth upon the grass, and placed on it bread and butter, cold biscuits, sandwiches, pickles, cakes, jellies, canned fruits, and other delicacies.

It was a feast fit for a king, and all the more enjoyable that the sea air and pleasant exercise had sharpened the appetites of the fortunate partakers.

Then, the meal disposed of, how deliciously restful it was to lounge upon the grass, chatting, singing, or silently musing with the sweet, bracing air all about them, the pretty sheet of still water almost at their feet, while away beyond it and the dividing strip of sand the ocean waves tossed and rolled, showing here and there a white, slowly moving sail.

So thoroughly did they enjoy it all that they lingered till the sun, nearing the western horizon, reminded them that the day was waning.

The drive home was not the least enjoyable part of the day. They took it in leisurely fashion, by a different route from the one they had taken in the morning, and with frequent haltings to gather berries, mosses, lichens, grasses, and strange beautiful flowers; or to gaze with delighted eyes upon the bare brown hills purpling in the light of the setting sun, and the rapidly darkening vales; Sankaty lighthouse, with the sea rolling beyond, on the one hand, and on the other the quieter waters of the harbor, with the white houses and spires of Nantucket Town half encircling it.

They had enjoyed their "squantum," marred by no mishap, no untoward event, so much that it was unanimously agreed to repeat the experiment, merely substituting some other spot for the one visited that day.

But their next excursion was to Wanwinet, situate on a narrow neck of land that, jutting out into the sea, forms the head of the harbor; Nantucket Town standing at the opposite end, some half dozen miles away.

Summer visitors to the latter place usually go to Wanwinet by boat, up the harbor, taking their choice between a sailboat and a tiny steamer which plies regularly back and forth during the season; but our 'Sconset party drove across the moors, sometimes losing their way among the hills, dales, and ponds, but rather enjoying that as a prolongation of the pleasure of the drive, and spite of the detention reached their destination in good season to partake of the dinner of all obtainable luxuries of the sea, served up in every possible form, which is usually considered the roam object of a trip to Wanwinet.

They found the dinner – served in a large open pavilion, whence they might gaze out over the dancing, glittering waves of the harbor, and watch the white sails come and go, while eating – quite as good as they had been led to expect.

After dinner they wandered along the beach, picking up shells and any curious things they could find – now on the Atlantic side, now on the shore of the harbor.

Then a boat was chartered for a sail of a couple of hours, and then followed the drive home to 'Sconset by a different course from that of the morning, and varied by the gradually fading light of the setting sun and succeeding twilight casting weird shadows here and there among the hills and vales.

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