THE FAIR GOD.

BOOK FIVE.

CHAPTER II.

A MESSAGE FROM THE GODS.

"It is done!" said the 'tzin in a whisper. "It is done! One more service, O comrade, if——"

"Do not spare me, good tzin. I am happiest when serving you."

"Then stay in the city to-night, and be here early after the discovery. Take part with the crowd, and, if opportunity offer, direct it. I must return to my exile. Report when all is over. The gods keep you! Farewell."

Hualpa, familiar with the square, went to the portico of the Chalcan; and as the lamps were out, and the curtains of the door drawn for the night, with the privilege of an *habitue* he stretched himself upon one of the lounges, and, lulled by the fountain, fell asleep.

A shout awoke him. He looked out to see the day breaking in gloom. The old sky of blue, in which the summer had so long and lovingly nestled, was turned to lead; the smoke seemed to have fallen from the temples, and burdening the atmosphere, was driving along slowly and heavily like something belonging to the vanishing night. Another cry louder than the first; then the door, or rather the screen behind him was opened, and the Chalcan himself came forth.

"Ah! son of my friend! Hark! Some maudlin fellow halooes. The fool would like to end his sleep, hard enough out there in the temple. But you—where have you been?"

"Here, good Xoli, on this lounge."

"The night? Ah, the *pulque* was too much for you. For your father's sake, boy, I give you advice; To be perfectly happy in Tenochtitlan it is necessary to remember first, how the judges punish drunkenness; next, that there is no pure liquor in the city except in the king's jars, and—There, the shout again! two of them! a third!"

And the broker also looked out of the portico.

"Holy gods, what a smoke! There goes some sober citizens, neighbors of mine, and running. Something of interest! Come, Hualpa, let us go also. The times are wonderful. You know there are gods in Tenochtitlan besides those we worship. Come!"

"I am hungry."

"I will feed you to bursting when we get back. Come on."

As they left the portico people were hastening to the centre of the square, where the outcry was now continuous and growing.

"Room for the Chalcan!" said a citizen, already on the ground. "Let him see what is here fallen from the clouds."

Great was the astonishment of the broker when his eyes first rested on the stately figure of the horse and the terrible head on the lance above it. Hualpa affected the same feeling, but, having a part to play, shouted, as in alarm:

"It is one of the fighting beasts of Malinche. Beware, O citizens! Your lives may be in danger."

The crowd, easily persuaded, fell back.

"Let us get arms!" shouted one.

"Arms! Get arms!" then rose in full chorus.

Hualpa ventured nearer, and cried out, "The beast is dead!"

"Keep off, boy!" said Xoli, himself at a respectable distance. "Trust it not; such things do not die."

Never speech more opportune for the Tihuancan.

"Be it of the earth or Sun, I tell you, friends, it is dead," he replied more loudly. "Who knows but that the holy Huitzal has set it up here to be seen of all of us, that we may know Malinche is not a god. Is there one among you who has a javelin?"

A weapon was passed to him over the heads of the fast increasing crowd.

"Stand aside. I will see."

Without more ado, the adventurer thrust deep into the horse's flank. Those directly about held their breath from fear; and when the brute stirred not, they looked at each other, not knowing what to say. That it was dead, was past doubt.

"Who will gainsay me now?" continued Hualpa. "It is dead, and so he is to whom you head belonged. Gods fall not so low."

It was one of these moments when simple minds are easily converted to any belief.

"Gods they are not," said a voice in the throng; "but whence came they?"

"And who put them here?" asked another.

Hualpa answered swiftly:

"Well said! The gods speak not directly to those whom they would admonish or favor. And if this be the handiwork of Huitzil'—and what more likely?—should we not inquire if it have a meaning? It may be a message. Is there a reader of pictures among you, friends?"

"Here is one!"

"Let him come! Make way for him!"

A citizen, from his dress a merchant, was pushed forward.

"What experience have you?"

"I studied in the *calmecac*." (the university.)

The man raised his eyes to the head on the lance, and they became transfixed with horror.

"Look, then, to what we have here, and, saying it is a message from the holy Huitzil', read it for us. Speak out, that all may hear."

The citizen was incapable of speech, and the people cried out, "He is a shame to the heroic god! Off with him! off with him!"

But Hualpa interfered. "No, He still believes Malinche a god. Let him alone! I can use him."

Then he spoke to the merchant. "Hear me, my friend, and I will read. If I err, stop me."

"Read, read!" went up on all sides.

Hualpa turned to the group as if studying it. Around him fell the silence of keen expectancy.

"Thus writes Huitzil', greatest of gods, to the children of Anahuac, greatest of peoples!"—so Hualpa began. "'The strangers in Tenochtitlan are my enemies and yours, O people. They come to overthrow my altars and make you a nation of slaves. You have sacrificed and prayed to me, and now I say to you, Arise! Take arms before it is too late. Malinche and his followers are but men. Strike them and they will die. To convince you that they are not gods, lo! here is one of them dead. So I say, slay them, and everything that owns them master, even the beasts they ride!'—Ho, friend, is not that correct?"

"So I would have read," said the merchant.

"Praised be Huitzil'!" cried Hualpa, devoutly.

"Live the good god of our fathers! Death to the strangers!" answered the people.

And amid the stir and hum of many voices, the comrade of the 'tzin, listening, heard his words repeated, and passed from man to man; so that he knew his mission done, and that by noon the story of the effigy would be common throughout the city, and in flight over the valley, with his exposition of its meaning accepted and beyond counteraction.

After awhile the Chalcan caught his arm, saying, "The smell is dreadful to a cultivated nose sharpened by an empty stomach. Snuff for one, breakfast for the other. Let us go."

Hualpa followed him.

"Who is he? who is he?" asked the bystanders eagerly.

"Him! Not know him! It is the brave lad who slew the tiger and saved the kings' life."

And the answer was to the exposition like an illuminated seal to a royal writ.

Morning advanced, curtained with clouds; and, as the account of the spectacle flew, the multitude in the *tianguez* increased, until there was not room left for business. All who caught the news hurried to see the sight, and for themselves read the miraculous message of Huitzil'. The clamor of tongues the while was like the clamor of waves, and not singularly; for thus was fought the first great battle—the battle of the mysteries—and with this result: if a believer in the divinity of Cortes looked once at the rotting head on the lance, he went away of the 'tzin's opinion, impatient for war.

About noon a party of Spaniards, footmen, armed and out inspecting the city, entered the square. The multitude daunted them not the least. Talking, sometimes laughing, they sauntered along, peering into the open booths and stalls, and watching with practised eyes for gold.

"Holy mass!" exclaimed one of them, stopping. "The heathen are at sacrifice."

"Sacrifice, saidst thou? This is their market-place."

"That as thou wilt. I tell thee they have been at worship. My eyes are not dim as my mother's, who was past fifty the day he left Cuba—may the saints preserve her! If they were, yet could I swear that yonder hangs the head of a victim."

Over the restless crowd they looked at the ghastly object, eager, yet uncertain.

(To be Continued.)

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STATIONS.	No. 1.	No. 3.
	A. M.	P. M.
Charlottetown.....dp	7 15	1 50
Royalty Junction.....	7 34	2 12
North Wiltshire.....	8 17	3 05
Hunter River.....	8 30	3 20
Bradalbane.....	9 00	3 57
Emerald Junction.....	9 09	4 07
Freetown.....	9 23	4 22
Kensington.....	9 40	4 45
	10 10	5 20
Summerside.....{ar	P. M.	
Summerside.....{dp	12 40	
Miscouche.....	1 00	
Wellington.....	1 27	
Port Hill.....	2 08	
O'Leary.....	3 22	
Bloomfield.....	3 45	
Alberton.....	4 20	
Tignish.....ar	5 15	

TRAINS FROM THE WEST.		
STATIONS.	No. 2.	No. 4.
	A. M.	
Tignish.....dp	6 00	
Alberton.....	6 55	
Bloomfield.....	7 30	
O'Leary.....	7 54	
Port Hill.....	9 07	
Wellington.....	9 49	
Miscouche.....	10 15	
Summerside.....{ar	10 35	
Summerside.....{dp	11 35	A. M. 6 30
	P. M.	
Kensington.....	12 05	7 05
Freetown.....	12 23	7 28
Emerald Junction.....	12 36	7 43
Bradalbane.....	12 45	7 53
Hunter River.....	1 15	8 30
North Wiltshire.....	1 29	8 45
Royalty Junction.....	2 12	9 37
Charlottetown.....ar	2 30	10 00

STATIONS.	No. 9.
	P. M.
Emerald Junction.....dp	4 10
Cape Traverse.....ar	5 00

STATIONS.	No. 10.
	A. M.
Cape Traverse.....dp	6 30
Emerald Junction.....ar	7 20

TRAINS FOR THE EAST.		
STATIONS.	No. 5.	No. 7.
	P. M.	
Charlottetown.....dp	2 30	
Royalty Junction.....	2 50	
Bedford.....	3 23	
Mount Stewart Junc.{ar	3 55	
Mount Stewart Junc.{dp	4 10	
Cardigan.....	5 22	
Georgetown.....ar	5 45	
		P. M.
Mount Stewart Junc....dp		4 05
Morell.....		4 43
St Peters.....		5 12
Bear River.....		5 57
Souris.....ar		6 40

TRAINS FROM THE EAST.		
STATIONS.	No. 6.	No. 8.
	A. M.	
Georgetown.....dp	7 15	
Cardigan.....	7 38	
Mount Stewart Junc.{ar	8 50	
Mount Stewart Junc.{dp	9 00	
Bedford.....	9 32	
Royalty Junction.....	10 05	
Charlottetown.....ar	10 25	
		A. M.
Souris.....dp		6 20
Bear River.....		7 03
St. Peters.....		7 48
Morell.....		8 17
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