

DAWN OF NOTHING

ISA GLENN

SOPHIE MALLORY had a hard time after her husband died.

Some cities are capricious jades, easy on you when the sun smiles, coming down on you when the clouds gather. Manila is like that. It is a city in which to take what life offers at the moment; nothing lasts overnight in the tropics. With the rank jungle pressing in upon even the cities, sending its shoots up through the pavements of roads that were hard and perfect last evening, getting its suggestion of overpowering growth across to the most unimaginative, the time comes when the futility of being human dawns on every exile.

Captain Mallory had been killed up in the interior of Mindanao. The news came in with the body, which had been frightfully hacked. The company had with difficulty managed to work their way back, bearing their dead for Christian burial in the graveyard of Camp Keithley. Sophie was sure that she could never in her life forget the look of that graveyard, as she had seen it through the black veil which a providential lady of the garrison had saved because she was sure there would be many funerals. The graveyard was bare of green; the cogon grass could not be encouraged to send up a blade inside the barbed-wire stockade lest it reclaim its own ground. In each

corner of the square inclosure had been planted a bush of San Francisco, as the Filipinos call a reddish variety of the croton plant. But the San Franciscos, scandalized by the proximity of Allah, languished, dropped the gay leaves which had clung to them during their journey down from Christian Manila, and put forth no more. Sophie fancied that the bare stems shuddered as the buglers sounded taps over the new grave.

Sophie had lived through her bereavement many times before it happened. She had had long months alone in their quarters at Keithley, the company in the *bosque* after hostile Moros, and herself without news except for an occasional letter brought in when weeks old. She used to sit near the oil-lamp, through the foggy evenings which began at four o'clock, sewing on some finery with which to charm her husband on his return; and as the fog gradually filled the room with its chilly ghost-like wreaths, she would brood over her suspicion that perfect happiness could not last. She had always known, in the back of her head, that it was too perfect to last. Captain Mallory was a good and decent man, walking a clean straight path of duty. That she, who was nothing finer than pretty, should have the privilege of being the wife of such a man

was incredible; it had remained incredible for the six years that it had lasted. She had known that he was a loan from God. Whenever he had gone out with the company, she had taken it as a reminder that God might withdraw His loan. She had not been surprised, then, when the company had brought Captain Malloy in to be buried.

But she had been sorry that he could not have been buried in some more beautiful cemetery. He had loved beauty. The memory of the forlorn San Franciscos tormented her.

She found that she was very poor, when her affairs had been settled. She had to get a job. And Keithley is a place where there are only two sorts of jobs: the job of being a man and going out to fight, and the job of being a wife and keeping the house running for the man's comfort when he rests. She had to leave Keithley in order to earn her living.

Her friends advised her to go back to the States. They said that she was too young and pretty to stay in the Islands. But Sophie felt that her protection was in the Philippines, because in the Philippines was now a grave which was baked in the sun of every morning and soaked in the fog and rain of every night. Besides, she had no relatives to whom to go back. She would have to hunt them up in various city directories; and they might not want her when she found them. Marrying into the army cuts a woman off from her relatives. She decided to stay in Manila, which was as close to the grave as she could manage.

For a white woman, jobs in Manila come down to a choice between a

beauty-parlor on the Escolta and being housekeeper of the Annex to the Army and Navy Club. The Annex had a housekeeper, a scrawny Eurasian woman with accumulated pasts. A manicure girl on the Escolta accumulated a scandalous present. Sophie was not sorry about the Annex; for she had never been able to run her own house and stay out of debt. She took a vacancy in one of the beauty-parlors, where she shampooed the hair of her old friends. She did very well at shampooing, which she preferred to manicuring, after a trial on high-ranking nails which in the past had been graciously extended to her from august receiving lines. She was nervous, and the little instrument slipped and cut into the short fingers loaded with dirty rings. The lady was very nice about it. She smiled tolerantly at Sophie. But she did murmur something about blood-poisoning being prevalent in the Islands, and Sophie heard her, as it had been intended that she should.

After that, Sophie stuck to shampooing and built up a clientele. The clientele, to be sure, numbered among the whites a few mestizas, and that was hard at first. But Sophie knew that if she gave up this job she would have to go back to the States. The difficulty was that she really knew how to do one thing only: she could sew beautifully. But the Filipino women also sewed beautifully and were cheaper. Sophie could not compete with women who lived outside the city in nipa shacks, and came into town in carabao carts or carromatas driven by one of their countless little brothers. Sophie had to live in a boarding-house in the

Walled City; and she had to eat more than the natives eat.

She had a year of it before Captain Mallory's regiment went back to the States. Their departure was a blow to Sophie, even though she had come to feel she no longer belonged to the regiment. When her friends had come up to Manila on leave, they had tried to hunt her up, and some of them had really done so. But it had been unsatisfactory. She could not tell just how it had been unsatisfactory. The regimental ladies had been kind and considerate; but she had known that it was kindness and consideration, instead of the old-time quarreling which had marked her as one of them. They made such a point of including her that she realized how definitely she was excluded. It was: "Do you remember how we do it, Sophie?" "You remember, Sophie . . . but perhaps you have forgotten . . . It does slip one's memory—the ways we have in the service." Never in the present tense, for her; always it was, did she remember? She no longer belonged to them and to their way of life. But neither did she belong to the distant relatives in the distant States. They had not written, in response to the death-notice which had been in the Washington papers with request to copy. To the distant relatives she was army; and to the army she was now civilian.

The grave at Keithley had to take care of her, had to come between her and thoughts of other men. When a woman had married a man as fine as Captain Mallory, she ought never to look at a man. Sophie leaned on the protection of that grave.

For another man came into her life.

She was very lonely, in the long evenings after the beauty-shop had closed. The army would be driving out to the Polo Club for tea, driving back to the Luneta for band concert, promenading and talking with each other before they formed into groups and wandered across the "made ground" to the Army and Navy Club for dinner. Sophie was seldom included. Sometimes they remembered her, but oftener they forgot all about her. The girls at the beauty-shop were kind; they told her that they knew how it felt, and probably they did, although they did not know how it felt to have been one of a group and to have been so soon forgotten. At any rate, she could not go out with the girls from the beauty-shop, although she was grateful for their sympathy; they went to places of which she had never heard. She had to go to her room, open the shutters, and sit in a bent-wood rocker that was too high from the floor, and make friends with the stars as they came out in the hot sky. If she thought about the breeze that at the moment was blowing across the Luneta, she had to turn on the electric fan and sit in the current of air stirred up by its blades, and try to imagine that Captain Mallory would soon be coming into the room and asking why she was not ready to go out with him.

And then somebody did remember her and kept on remembering her, planning things for her pleasure, worrying over her. Somebody started the custom of taking her driving in his little calesa and stopping at Clarke's on the way back. It was so hot, and she had been out

in the Islands for so long now, that Clarke's ice-cream parlor down at the end of the Escolta was a cooled and shaded heaven; young Captain Gilbert took on the semblance of an angel of that cool heaven.

Sophie was prettier than ever, in thin frocks of candy-striped jusi that she got up early in the mornings to finish for the afternoon drives. The pink and white stripes reflected color into a face that the tropics had bleached. She had the sort of heart-shaped face which between the ears is broad, giving room for the squareness of the jaw before it tapers into the delicately pointed chin. The strength of obstinacy, the weakness of delicacy—both were there.

It was not long before Captain Gilbert asked her to marry him. They were driving along a road leading back to the city which lay, fair and smiling and deceitful, like a mirage above the heat-waves that still quivered up from the steaming ground. It was growing dark, and the scent of the ylang-ylang trees was almost overpoweringly sweet. Of late, Sophie had noticed, the scent of the ylang-ylang, and of the night-blooming jasmine, the *dama de la noche*, had made her restless—had made her faint—had seemed too sweet to be borne by a lonely woman. She shrank from him with something like dread in her eyes.

"Oh!" she exclaimed. "Oh! But—I am married!"

"What do you mean by that?" he demanded sternly, his handsome youthful face clouded.

Sophie gasped a little.

"I—I don't mean—to any one who is here! I—I am still married, I mean."

Gilbert's eyes stared at her through the thickening dusk.

"Do you mean—that you are never going to marry again—and on account of—Mallory? That you are going to take care of yourself for the rest of your life, and out here?"

She nodded.

"But—but that's clearly nonsense! See here: you aren't the sort of woman who can take care of herself—at home even! I mean to say—you are so little, you know—so awfully helpless, you strike me. Sophie—you'd better let me take care of you! You'd better give up and marry me! I'll be good to you; I swear I'll be good to you! You need a man who'll—who'll be fair with you."

But Sophie shook her head. "I could never possibly marry again," she told him. "Because I've been married to such a wonderful man. That's the reason, you see; I couldn't go back on him, now he isn't here to keep me from doing it. It's such a wonderful thought—that I've been married to such a good man! I'd want to be his wife, when I die—not another man's wife too. You understand that, don't you? That's the way he is feeling about it. He never had any other woman in his life, to share him with me; it wouldn't be fair, if he had to share me with some other man."

Gilbert had been opening and closing his lips while she said this. He was staring at her, with perplexity, with hesitation. But by the time that she had finished he was looking away, and his lips were tightly closed. It was some time before he turned his eyes back from the mirage of the city. When he

spoke it was slowly, finding the way for each sentence when the sentence before had died.

"But how are you going to get along? How are you going to get along, when I've gone back to the States? I'm under orders. Who is going to look after you then? Sophie—I tell you, you just aren't the kind who can take care of herself—can make a half-way decent living—can give herself even the necessities. You are making a needless sacrifice. And—and you're so little . . ."

Sophie had a lump in her throat. But she held out against him. He left on the next transport; and then she burst into weeping that she thought would never stop.

"I am lonely—" she would say to herself between her fits of weeping. "That's what is the matter. I'm just lonely. . . . And it isn't fair that flowers out here should smell so dreadfully sweet—"

She kept saying to herself that the flowers smelled too sweet. And they did, for her. Flowers which have no scent in the daytime, and which during the long warm nights send out waves of an enervating paradise, are not fair to lonely women who are young. Some such thought must have been in her mind; for when she said to herself that the scents were too sweet, she always added, "I am lonely."

Months later, she added to that, "I am hungry." For she lost her job. She supposed that she had not eaten enough. The rainy season was on; and she sometimes had to take a calesa to the shop instead of the crowded electric cars which, as they ran through the narrow streets of the

Walled City, collected five natives for every space meant to accommodate one. And she had been afraid to spend much money on food. One morning she fainted. She was standing over the head of a mestizo woman, rubbing away at the heavy hair which still, through the suds, smelled of musk; and suddenly, through the open windows, the heat that rose from the moist pavement floated in on her, and she crumpled into a heap on the polished floor. There were many girls waiting for her job.

In the going and coming of regiments, it happened that none of her friends was at this time in the Islands. There was no one to help her out. So she fell to doing all sorts of odd jobs. She sewed for civilian Americans who stopped at the hotel in the Walled City. She took care of a baby, until the mother got a Japanese nurse who looked more regular, she told Sophie. That was the way Sophie dropped from the army to stray civilians; loneliness, poverty, fright at the fact that every month she earned less money. And these men who drifted in and out of Manila, and were idle and ready for good times that they did not know the town well enough to go out and find, were glad of the company of a pretty woman who was quite white. She did not enjoy their company; but she got somewhat healthier with drives in the cool of the evenings and elaborate dinners at the Elks' Club. They looked upon her as army. They sat, after dinner, on the sea veranda of the Elks' gazing across at the Army and Navy Club, and said to her, sometime in the course of every evening: "Lord! That's a

grand club! It's got the right of way out here; huh? It's got the position nearest the bay; it's got the best view; it's got the greater part of the breeze even! Can you beat that?" And then they would look at her with a reflection of the admiration which the army's right of way aroused; and Sophie, thinking of the army's, "Do you still remember how we do it?" felt her heart warming to these strangers. Her pale face would flush with her gratification. Three years now since the army had claimed her. Her flush would get up into her eyes, making them soft. That softness was in her eyes one evening when the man who had brought her to dinner leaned nearer in order to fill her glass. He stopped, with his hand raised, and stared at her.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed. "By Jove! You're a pretty thing!" He placed the squat bottle on the little wicker table standing conveniently near, and leaned closer to Sophie. He put his hand over hers.

Sophie's fancy had flown back to the young Gilbert, who had feared to touch her because she was "so little." She drew her fingers from underneath the rather fat hand of her host, and sat back in her long chair. Her eyes were still soft, however, from her memory of Gilbert. And the same scents of ylang-ylang and of the *dama de la noche* blew over them on the breeze that was changing, for the night, from the sea to the land. It made Sophie languid. Her limbs were heavy, her brain drugged by the sweetness of the city by night. The city affected her this way, she had noticed, more and more as time went on. She drew in a deep breath of the sweet odors.

"Ever think of marryin' again?" the man was asking with interest.

She came to herself with a start. Her body stiffened in her long chair. The ylang-ylang blew through her hair.

"I mean," the man Fenton continued, "you're young, and good lookin'. You ought to have no trouble in findin' a husband out here. Me, now—what would you say to me? I'm a lonely cuss; stuck out here with my business. Never got the idea of marryin' before a minute ago. What would you say to our joinin' fortunes; huh?"

And once more Sophie shook her head at marriage.

"I am never going to marry *again*," she said, "because I consider that I am still married."

The man twirled his cigar around in his thick fingers. With keen eyes he regarded her speculatively. "Is that so?" he inquired. "Well, now, I never had a woman spring that on me before!" He laughed. "Had to come to Manila to hear a new line!"

A new line for Sophie too, the line he now took with her. With the efficiency that stood him in good stead in the pursuit of his business dealings, he saw that she had chances for comparing lonely evenings in her hot room with cool drives and good dinners in his company.

"You're a fool," he told her one evening. She noticed that she was no longer to him a pretty thing; she was a fool. They were driving back from Santa Ana. The sunset screamed at them, a red scream that tore the nerves. He had told her of his departure on the morrow for Hongkong, where he was to install a branch of his business; and he had

suggested that she come along and see for herself how she would like that city as a place for future residence if he decided to establish himself there instead of in Manila. "What's your game anyhow?" he went on querulously. "You can't hang on to the army's skirts forever! Well, now, I'll tell you what. I'll be comin' back here anyway, in a few months. You can see, in the meantime, how you enjoy yourself beatin' around alone."

That was the end of it, for the time during which he was away. Sophie worked harder than ever, worked against time in a frenzied effort to prove to herself that she could take care of herself. She did not miss him in the least, but she missed his calesa and his dinners, and she was, for her, brutally frank with herself about it. As weeks went by, she became more and more candid and clear-eyed. She came to the time when she wondered if she had been right when she refused to marry Gilbert. But she always said to herself, when she found that this thought was creeping into her mind: "*He* only had me in his life. It wouldn't be fair. He was always so fair toward me."

The new months worked a difference, however. No diversion. Back to the program of hot evenings in her hot room, sitting in the wide-open window fighting mosquitos; jumping up to chase a bat; falling back into the bent-wood rocker that was too high from the floor; listening to the cheerful people who swarmed along the *banquetas*. She could not go out on the *banqueta*, to sit in one of the chairs tipped back against the walls;

she was a lone woman, and lone white women could not do such things in Manila. But the scents of the insidious night-blooming flowers could blow over lone women; there was no unspoken regulation which prevented that catastrophe. The evenings of idleness were things to be dreaded throughout the whole working day.

For she was at work again, on the most taxing job that she had yet found. To the Hotel Delmonico, in the Walled City, had come an elderly lady, to look up in the Islands the whereabouts of some scoundrelly nephew. The elderly lady had, coupled with weak eyes, a complete ignorance of the Spanish language. But her inquiries forced her to read the native sheets. She asked at the desk for some one who could come to her every morning and translate the newspapers; and the Señora at the desk recommended Sophie, who had been sewing for homeward-bound patrons into whose heads had crept suspicion of Manila styles.

Miss Balch, finding that tropical sunlight was violent, dropped into the habit of sending Sophie out on shopping expeditions. Sophie, who had been in the Islands so long that she had almost forgotten how to walk, found herself rushing up and down the blazing Escolta from eight in the mornings, when the shops opened, to their closing hour at twelve. With her head throbbing, her eyes squinting before the reflections in corners not reached by the direct rays of the sun, Sophie would then, at the siesta hour, hurry to the Hotel Delmonico and consult with Miss Balch about her purchases; and the greater number went back for exchange when the

shops reopened at five o'clock. It did not take many weeks of this to bring an ashen tightness to Sophie's skin. In her little mirror, when she went home at six, she would scrutinize her face; and she could see that she looked older, plainer. Lines were showing around her eyes. Her throat was now too soft to last long; already it showed a disastrous droop. Sophie would sit down and cry until her tired eyes were red. It was hard, to break when one was under thirty. And because she thought about it so much, her mouth broke too, and the corners turned down with unspoken discontent. Her hair looked as dead as she felt, lying down close to her head with languor. She could have shampooed it oftener, but she sickened at thought of the steaming suds necessary. Besides, what did it matter how her hair looked, when her shoulders drooped with fatigue, when her round breast had flattened out? She crept back and forth between the Hotel Delmonico and her room, between Miss Balch and loneliness.

One morning, when she reported, Miss Balch was alert with news.

"After all this time, Mrs. Mallory, success is in sight, and I can soon go home!"

Sophie answered politely, her weary eyes staring down a jobless future.

"To-morrow," Miss Balch continued, "a detective from Iloilo is coming to see me, bringing with him the records for which I have been searching. My nephew's career in the Islands has at last been cleared up. I don't mind telling you—you seem to be a discreet woman who hasn't let the tropics loosen your tongue—I don't see why I shouldn't

tell you that my nephew was all but disinherited by his uncle on account of rumors which had reached the family. My brother added a codicil to his will, leaving his money to a hospital in the event that our nephew had actually become involved with this Filipino woman. I had not, until I came in touch with this Iloilo man, been able to trace the creature and her child."

"Oh, Miss Balch!" exclaimed Sophie, shocked into interruption, "Oh—who could have been so dastardly as to start such a tale about an American?"

The spinster looked at her with sardonic amusement. "It is often done," she replied. "Thousands of men out here, with the Pacific between them and their families—they run wild of course. They may not care much for the little brown brothers; but brown sisters are a different thing. It is frequently done, I assure you."

"Not by nice men," persisted Sophie stubbornly. "Nice men—just couldn't!"

Miss Balch laughed disagreeably. It was surprising how disagreeable her mouth of a sudden seemed to Sophie.

"I have often observed that maiden ladies know more about men than married women," she remarked. "I have studied the sex, while you have taken them at their own valuation. I am convinced that this precious nephew of mine did something disgraceful out here. If he didn't do what we heard he did, then he did something else. But I am rather of the opinion that he is innocent of this particular charge. The child, I am told, has hair that is dis-

tinctly reddish. My nephew's hair was black. I presume that the creature's hair was also black. I have been observing the nasty little women one sees on the streets, and I haven't seen one yet with red hair." She knitted complacently. "Yes; I am sure, in my own mind, that my nephew is innocent—in this instance. He can inherit the money. I am glad of that, Mrs. Mallory, because I suspect that my brother left the money to that particular hospital on account of a very pretty nurse attached to it who once took care of him through an illness. All men are weak. But I prefer having my undeniably weak nephew inherit this money than that it should go out of the family."

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The click of Miss Balch's knitting-needles began, about this time, to strike upon Sophie's ear-drums. She was glad when the papers were read and she was sent out to wrangle with a Chino tailor down the street, for the Chino's thick-lipped smile was pleasanter than the insinuations of her countrywoman. She had many times heard inferences such as Miss Balch's, but they had not been accompanied by the click on her ear-drums of steel knitting-needles. She was glad that Miss Balch was about to wind up her business and go home; glad, although it would mean she was once more without steady work.

But her room seemed unaccountably close that night. She turned on her bed, whose sheets felt to her skin like heated metal, and wished that she could make up her mind to go back to the States. Nothing in America could be worse than Manila had been to her. It would take just

a little courage, to face job-hunting in another place. She said to herself that she would try it. She turned again, on the blistering sheets that were stretched tightly over the ratan of her bed. The scent of the ylang-ylang stole in at her open window; languor stole through her veins.

"It is time that I go home," she told herself.

"The country is getting me; I am too young, still, to risk it out here any longer," she added, an hour later. For she knew that the languor was in more than her head. She felt that she could curse the dreaminess of the nights, with their sweet breath.

But in the morning, on her way to ask at the quartermaster's office for transportation, she found that without having realized the process, she had so rotted in initiative as to be no longer capable of forming a straight decision. She turned around and went to the Hotel Delmonico to read to Miss Balch.

There was some one with Miss Balch. As Sophie entered, a wiry little man turned on her shifting eyes which moved in spurts of speed.

"This lady is my secretary," introduced Miss Balch with condescension. "You may talk freely before her."

The little man licked his lips. "Well, as I was sayin', Miss Balch—and young lady—your nephew got in with a tough crowd when he was lookin' over that country. But he ain't responsible for this one break in particular, leastways no more than all the rest of 'em was. You understand what I mean, lady? I don't like to talk plain before ladies from home."

Miss Balch waved her hand.

The man resumed, upon that: "Rough bunch—that bunch your nephew ran with—names, Donnelly, Milliken, and Smith. Away from home for the first time, most likely, in their lives. I happened to be down there then, at this same work—lookin' up records for the folks at home. 'Tain't hard work, with so few whites out here, in a way of speakin', and fewer still in the Southern Islands. And you can't forget the names of high steppers like those men was, that time in Iloilo. I'm keepin' notes of all of 'em I caught in that drag-net. Good thing in my line of business, you understand. There was another one I almost forgot to mention—name, Flynn—one of the wildest!" There was furtive admiration in the man's voice. He once more licked his lips. "It wasn't more'n four years ago, this night when your nephew got in trouble—'cause the natives thought, bein' a civilian, he'd have more money than the rest to pay up with. There was a boat in from Mindanao; and those officers aboard was just out for a good time. There was one or two that went crazy, what with gettin' out o' Mindanao for a breathin'-spell—a lieutenant and a captain—names, Jones and Mallory. I'll never forget 'em—them boys!"

Sophie stared stupidly at him. She kept saying to herself, "It must be a mistake." The man went on talking. His details grew more and more of a sort to be kept from "ladies from home." Sophie knew that Miss Balch was laughing, an unpleasant silent laugh, no sound coming from her lips, only the grimace of a cheerless mouth stretched to let escape the sneer that lurked behind cover.

"In the *fonda*, that night—" the man was reciting. But Sophie was still saying to herself that there was some mistake. Her husband had gone up to Iloilo, she remembered; he had been ordered there to testify before a court martial. He had come back to Keithley rather done in, and had told her that he had had to work hard and had got no rest. She began to press her hands together. But she could not keep them tightly together; they dropped apart, and shook, and it required an effort of her conscious mind to get them back where they could hold on to each other.

"Between you and I," the man was saying now—"between you and I, you was right about the red hair. That captain had the reddest hair I ever seen! It made me laugh!"

Sophie sprang from her chair. The clenched hands rose, came down again, limp, to hold on to each other with fingers that were damp and slippery. She opened her mouth to tell the man that he lied, but the steady nerve to back the words was lacking, and she ran from the room.

It was long before she found herself in the street. She did not remember what she had been doing. She thought that she had been walking up and down the long *sala*, wringing her slippery hands together. She had stumbled down the curving stairway and had rushed through the lobby of the hotel. The fat Señora had called out something about a hat, and had squalled uncomplimentary remarks on mad Americanas. The *muchacho* who, on his knees, was wiping off the marble floor of the lobby, had scrambled to his feet and had got out of her way.

There was a haze of red before her eyes. It gleamed from the reflections where the sun did not reach. She tried to get away from the red haze. She turned corner after corner, running through the maze of the Walled City like a rat in a trap, dodging the red which she saw everywhere. Red sun . . . or was it red hair with the sun on it?

She came to the opening in the old wall through which the Americans had laid out a new street to the "made ground," and dodged through it and went on in the direction of the Luneta. The sun blazed down with noonday fervor. She began to stagger, and to run in little curves which did not get her on very fast.

"Hello!" said a loud voice, close at her side. A heavy hand seized her arm. She lifted her head and looked into Fenton's shrewd eyes. "What's all this?" he continued. "Here I've just got in, as I wrote you I would, and was thinkin' about telephoning you this evening; and here I run across you scootin' along like a mad thing. And in the broilin' sun too! What's up? Huh?"

Sophie leaned against him. Her feet felt like pressing themselves together, as her limp hands were pressed together—for want of something definite in the world. He held her away, looking searchingly at her face.

"Gosh! You've gone off in your looks!" he exclaimed. "At the end of your rope, ain't you? Gettin' old. A white woman only lasts to thirty, in the tropics. Still—you *are* white . . ."

Sophie scarcely heard him. She was staring beyond him, at the Army and Navy Club in the distance. The building, in the glare of the sun, stared back at her with a cruel aloofness. She caught at one of his words and comforted herself. She was white, and this man valued her white blood. Some men were not particular about white blood. This man had black hair, and he liked white women. Some men . . . Fighting against the dryness of her lips, she spoke.

He smiled. "Oh, no, my girl, you won't! No marrying in question—now! You're not as young, or as pretty, as you were when I asked you. You turned me down then, and I'll turn down that proposition now. Turn about's fair play!" His eyes narrowed as he looked at her. "But I'll tell you what I will do. You're white, so I don't mind the rest of it—that you ain't a swell any more. That other proposition—to come with me to Hongkong—holds good."

Sophie stood beating her hands feebly together. But it was the young Gilbert of whom she was thinking—Gilbert, the only man who had been fair with her.

THE EXCEPTIONAL CHILD

Leland Stanford's Comparative Study of a Thousand Gifted Children

FRED C. KELLY

AS A CHILD how did you compare with neighbors' children in intelligence? Or if you have children of your own, how do they measure up with others?

Assuming that you, your children, or both, are exceptional, how much of this has been inherited and how much should be accounted for by the kind of upbringing you have had?

What are the more noteworthy traits of exceptional children? How do they differ from average children? Do they come in large families or small families? What are their parents like? In short, what is the origin of genius, and where does it best thrive?

Answers to such questions as these, and many more, have been the object of elaborate scientific investigation in California, where Leland Stanford University has conducted a state-wide search for exceptionally gifted children.

It was an expensive hunt, but with money from the Commonwealth Fund, one of the great research foundations, the investigators accomplished a wonderful job. By intelligence tests, examination of school records, inquiry into homes, and by other means, they believe they have located approximately

1000 as gifted children as could be found. As California schools are particularly good, here was an ideal locality for carrying on such an investigation. For convenience, the search was confined to the larger cities—not because children there would be any more gifted, but because to have covered every village and R.F.D. route would have put the cost even beyond the large sum available.

The main group studied consisted of 643 children, and less extensive material was collected from a second group of 309, making a total of nearly 1000. Of this number, boys exceeded girls—almost 120 boys to every 100 girls. In the general school population below high school, there were only a little more than 104 boys to every 100 girls.

Frequently more than one gifted child came from the same parents. (From 502 families 317 boys and 274 girls were selected.) Out of one family of five children, four were intelligent enough to be selected for this study. These, it happened, were offspring of a Japanese-American marriage.

All scientific studies of such statistics indicate that the tendency is for exceptional children to appear in smaller families. The average size