

## CHAPTER LXXIV

### Advancing Deeper Into The Vale, They Encounter Donjalolo

From the mouth of the cavern, a broad shaded way over-arched by fraternal trees embracing in mid-air, conducted us to a cross-path, on either hand leading to the opposite cliffs, shading the twin villages before mentioned.

Level as a meadow, was the bosom of the glen. Here, nodding with green orchards of the Bread-fruit and the Palm; there, flashing with golden plantations of the Banana. Emerging from these, we came out upon a grassy mead, skirting a projection of the mountain. And soon we crossed a bridge of boughs, spanning a trench, thickly planted with roots of the Tara, like alligators, or Hollanders, reveling in the soft alluvial. Strolling on, the wild beauty of the mountains excited our attention. The topmost crags poured over with vines; which, undulating in the air, seemed leafy cascades; their sources the upland groves.

Midway up the precipice, along a shelf of rock, sprouted the multitudinous roots of an apparently trunkless tree. Shooting from under the shallow soil, they spread all over the rocks below, covering them with an intricate net-work. While far aloft, great boughs--each a copse--clambered to the very summit of the mountain; then bending over, struck anew into the soil; forming along the verge

an interminable colonnade; all manner of antic architecture standing against the sky.

According to Mohi, this tree was truly wonderful; its seed having been dropped from the moon; where were plenty more similar forests, causing the dark spots on its surface.

Here and there, the cool fluid in the veins of the mountains gushed forth in living springs; their waters received in green mossy tanks, half buried in grasses.

In one place, a considerable stream, bounding far out from a wooded height, ere reaching the ground was dispersed in a wide misty shower, falling so far from the base of the cliff; that walking close underneath, you felt little moisture. Passing this fall of vapors, we spied many Islanders taking a bath.

But what is yonder swaying of the foliage? And what now issues forth, like a habitation astir? Donjalolo drawing nigh to his guests.

He came in a fair sedan; a bower, resting upon three long, parallel poles, borne by thirty men, gayly attired; five at each pole-end. Decked with dyed tappas, and looped with garlands of newly-plucked flowers, from which, at every step, the fragrant petals were blown; with a sumptuous, elastic motion the gay sedan came on; leaving behind it a long, rosy wake of fluttering leaves and odors.

Drawing near, it revealed a slender, enervate youth, of pallid beauty, reclining upon a crimson mat, near the festooned arch of the bower. His anointed head was resting against the bosom of a girl; another stirred the air, with a fan of Pintado plumes. The pupils of his eyes were as floating isles in the sea. In a soft low tone he murmured "Media!"

The bearers paused; and Media advancing; the Island Kings bowed their foreheads together.

Through tubes ignited at the end, Donjaloln's reclining attendants now blew an aromatic incense around him. These were composed of the stimulating leaves of the "Aina," mixed with the long yellow blades of a sweet-scented upland grass; forming a hollow stem. In general, the agreeable fumes of the "Aina" were created by one's own inhalations; but Donjalolo deeming the solace too dearly purchased by any exertion of the royal lungs, regaled himself through those of his attendants, whose lips were as moss-rose buds after a shower.

In silence the young prince now eyed us attentively; meanwhile gently waving his hand, to obtain a better view through the wreaths of vapor. He was about to address us, when chancing to catch a glimpse of Samoa, he suddenly started; averted his glance; and wildly commanded the warrior out of sight. Upon this, his attendants would have soothed him; and Media desired the Upoluan to withdraw.

While we were yet lost in wonder at this scene, Donjalolo, with eyes closed, fell back into the arms of his damsels. Recovering, he fetched a deep sigh, and gazed vacantly around.

It seems, that he had fancied Samoa the noon-day specter of his ancestor Marjora; the usurper having been deprived of an arm in the battle which gained him the girdle. Poor prince: this was one of those crazy conceits, so puzzling to his subjects.

Media now hastened to assure Donjalolo, that Samoa, though no cherub to behold, was good flesh and blood, nevertheless. And soon the king unconcernedly gazed; his monomania having departed as a dream.

But still suffering from the effects of an overnight feast, he presently murmured forth a desire to be left to his women; adding that his people would not fail to provide for the entertainment of his guests.

The curtains of the sedan were now drawn; and soon it disappeared in the groves. Journeying on, ere long we arrived at the western side of the glen; where one of the many little arbors scattered among the trees, was assigned for our abode. Here, we reclined to an agreeable repast. After which, we strolled forth to view the valley at large; more especially the far-famed palaces of the prince.