

ZULIEKA

A CHILD OF TWO WORLDS

BY OLIVE

Through the Mediumship of

Mrs. CORA L. V. RICHMOND.

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PART II.

CHAPTER VII.

The New World.

TWILIGHT.

Would anything ever seem real to Zelda again?

From bloomland to grayland; from azure to cloud; from brightness to haze; from splendor to mist; from love-presence to love-absence. Nothing—nothing real.

Always she waited for the full morning; it never came. The dawn alone seemed to remain. Always she watched for the full splendor of the moonlight and starlight; the twilight never seemed to go.

She would stand for hours watching the cloud-pictures, mezzotinted; masses of mist and ponderous grayness, piled from horizon to zenith; ships of vapor sailing upon impenetrable seas; curtains of haze trailing down from cloud canopies, trailing and partly covering the brown, bare branches of the half-viewless trees.

"It is always twilight here," she murmured; "never is it day, never is it the night of moon and stars; always morning or evening. I wonder if it is always like this—cold, gray, autumn-winter?"

Verdure there was and had been during all the long, undecided winter—verdure close-cut, carefully pruned and trimmed; grass, box-wood, laurel, rhododendron, cultivated and watched until they were afraid to grow; trained and made neat and tidy like the English maids, or stately like the English dames.

No wonder that the leaves of the oak and elm-trees, of flowering shrub and closely-trimmed vines had gone away on the fetterless pinions of the autumn wind to find a resting-place somewhere, anywhere to be free and unwatched, to fall asleep.

But O, the snow! the feathery frost-flowers. Once she had seen the snow, resting like a shining crown on the far-off mountains, but these rain-blossoms, these starry flowers, how unearthly did they seem!

She loved the snow, fleeting though it was, and she kissed the first flakes that fell upon her hand like a winsome child, until they were wet with the dew distilled by the snow-blossoms, tears they shed in thus dying upon the shell-tinted palms of Zelda's hands, and the tears fell from Zelda's eyes, meeting and mingling with the drops of melted snow.

Like a baptism of heaven seemed this gentle sorrow and gentle death of the snow-flowers, soothing and calming her restless spirit; hushing, but not wholly quelling, the wild longing of her heart, for she cried aloud as she stretched out her arms towards the East:

"Armand, my beloved, come to me; I cannot bear this absence any longer."

One refuge alone afforded her heart relief; one light alone was there in the midst of the overbrooding shade—their beautiful, unfolding lotus-bud, Zulieka. She would not pine, she would not seem ungrateful, but even the fair, tender beauty of their child seemed to make this temporal separation harder to bear.

"True," she soliloquized, "I can and do visit him in my dreams. In visions he comes to me; I go to him; through all the perils of his journeyings I companion him. I have seen him in the bungalows of the traveler, in the palace of the Rajah; in the forest and on the plain, forever coming, forever hastening to me. But O, for the day and the hour when he will fold me again to his heart! With him I could bear everything—privation, poverty; but without him these splendid halls are dungeons."

RETROSPECT.

When Armand returned to Montrose Towers, to Zelda and his babe, from his official journey to Calcutta, he found Zelda greatly agitated and disturbed over an experience through which she had passed during his absence.

Mr. Metcalf had arrived at the Towers, and had obtained an audience with Zelda, making Armand's absence his pretext for disturbing her.

"Lady Montrose will pardon my abrupt return and informal arrival at the Towers, but I have left here some valuable and important papers, important in connection with the affairs of the late Earl of Montrose, and the legal records will not be complete without them." Mr. Metcalf said this in his blandest manner.

Zelda reflected a moment, and then replied:

"It will be quite impossible, Mr. Metcalf, for me to produce them or any other papers in the possession of my husband, for his valuable papers and documents of state are carefully locked in a safe of which he alone has the keys, and the knowledge wherewith to open it."

"But it is quite impossible for me to proceed to England without them, and his lordship's business will be delayed at least six months, perhaps a year, if I do not take the papers with me," urged Mr. Metcalf.

Again Zelda said, and this time with less courtesy in her voice:

"But Mr. Metcalf surely understands that to obtain the papers from anyone except Lord Montrose will be quite impossible. If Mr. Metcalf will remain in Galle until the return of the Earl of Montrose, he will no doubt be able to obtain that which he seeks."

The wily solicitor had no idea of remaining, but to prolong the interview, and gain time to make further plans, he proceeded to interrogate Zelda in a manner that put to flight all remaining ideas of courtesy, a courtesy she had tried to extend to the solicitor of the late Earl of Montrose and her husband's legal adviser.

Without noticing his questions, which related to the private business of Armand, Zelda arose and motioned the attendants to show Mr. Metcalf to his palanquin.

He discovered his mistake, and rubbing his hands together, he said, hastily: "My dear Lady Montrose, professional confidence is absolutely necessary—"

Zelda did not wait for him to complete the sentence. Her servants passed him out, and she withdrew even before he reached the door that led to the verandah, in front of which his palanquin waited.

Zelda's nerves were quite unstrung by this interview, especially as her letters from Armand had informed her of his surprise at finding Mr. Metcalf waiting for him in Calcutta.

She was fated to receive a greater shock by the totally unexpected return of Hiejo, who appeared at her side in two minutes after the departure of Mr. Metcalf.

She sprang toward him in great apprehension, exclaiming: "You have returned! Is your master coming? Is he well? Why are you here instead of by his side?"

All these questions and ejaculations followed each other so

rapidly that Hiejo only had opportunity to prostrate himself at her feet, from which posture he arose when her questions were finished, and he had an opportunity to reply:

"My lord is well and safe. My lady needed me now, and I am here."

Zelda had not recovered from the unpleasant feeling that Mr. Metcalf had left, but when Hiejo came a great terror possessed her lest something had befallen Armand. Now, however, that was dispelled; but what did Hiejo mean by saying, "My lady needs me now, and I am here?"

She never questioned Hiejo when he uttered the sphinx-like remarks quite usual to him; she knew he would tell her all in due time.

When Armand, on his return, heard of Mr. Metcalf's unexpected arrival at the Towers, and his unwarrantable intrusion upon Zelda—when he revolved in his mind that he knew there were no papers belonging to or connected with the settlement of his father's estate of which Mr. Metcalf did not have duplicates, and when he also recalled Mr. Metcalf's presence at Calcutta, his strange demeanor there, and his still more inexplicable disappearance, grave doubts and suspicions began to take form in his mind. Once or twice they had arisen before, only to be dismissed as totally unworthy.

"Why should I doubt my father's most trusted adviser; he to whom the most important events in his life, and the message of his death, and his latest wishes were entrusted? Then why did he not wait until my return?"

Armand did not express these doubts to Zelda, but commenting her discretion and dignity, he said, fondly:

"My Zelda always says and does the best, always knows what is wisest."

Nor did Armand think it prudent to narrate to Zelda the especial scene of danger from which Hiejo had guarded him in Calcutta. She knew Hiejo was right in going, but she thought the danger had been wholly averted by his presence, that perhaps it had been of some unseen foe, yet of these she had little fear.

"Much have I to tell you, my beloved, of all that I saw and heard in the pilgrimage to the Sacred Tree, of which I made mention in my letters; but I will reserve the account until we are on our voyage to England, for then we shall have much time for conversation, and there will be no official duties crowding upon me. How delightful to sail away, if sail we must from our Eden isle, taking all our hearts' treasures with us. I could leave Paradise and go with my Zelda anywhere; to remain without her would be Hades! Does my Zelda mourn that we must leave our home?"

"How can you, my beloved, ask? Do I mourn when my king of love is here? The day might pass, the blossoms fade, every beautiful image perish and wither; this fair island sail from sight and be swallowed by the engulfing waters; but if my love, my own Armand, remained, and our babe, I could not mourn. I could sail forever on an unknown sea; dwell forever on an unknown shore, with you, my Armand, by my side, and be content; nay, our paradise goes with us," replied Zelda.

THE TOWER AGAIN.

"There is one thing, however, I must tell you, my love, before we are so far immersed in cares and duties incident upon our departure as not to have a moment of leisure for conversation."

"You did not tell me, my beloved, that you had discovered, or supposed that you had, through the intervention of Hiejo, the cause of the strange light we saw in the tower on the evening before your departure. Hiejo told me the day following, and said: 'My lady will not fear any more lights in the tower, for the secretary has gone away to Calcutta with my master.' He then explained that the S. S. was very fond of study, and that he watched the stars at night. I then remembered that when we first came here, and he saw the telescope and charts conveyed to the tower, he asked permission to sometimes visit the observatory and the study. I gave him duplicate keys, and told him he might go there whenever we did not wish to visit the observatory or the room beneath."

Armand uttered an involuntary exclamation: "That explains it all."

"Yes, it explains the light we saw," said Zelda, surprised at Armand's vehemence, concerning what to him must be a very unimportant matter, "but it does not explain what I am about to tell you," she then continued. "One evening, after my beloved had been away more than a week, the night was unusually beautiful; I was restless because of my thoughts of you, and I sought the little Shrine in the garden."

"You know, dearest, it is a revered custom, an act of worship among my father's people, to keep the sacred fire forever burning, and you well know that before our altar here in the house, and at the shrine in the garden, the fire has never once been extinguished; that although smouldering we have but to open the chalice and the flame will at once come forth."

"Taking the ayah with me, and bidding her wait for me a little way from the Shrine, I poured a few drops of oil on the altar fire, and renewed the flame with one small piece of the sacred wood. I knelt at our altar, beloved, above which, also, the cross and the sacred star are placed, and I prayed, as I ever pray, to the Supreme Good, the Giver of Life and Light, for thy safety, for the life and well-being of our babe; for all whom we know and love, and for all the world of spirits and mortals; I prayed for strength to do my part, and pervading my prayer was the praise to the great Giver for this best gift of our love. The whispering winds breathed a soft response, and the waves chanted a solemn anthem as I turned toward the house."

"Imagine my surprise, knowing the secretary was with you, beloved, knowing Hiejo was away, to see a clear, full light streaming from the tower. I turned to question the ayah, but she had fled."

"I believe at first I was terrified, for I could not move. I used all my will-power and rallied, walking very deliberately to the verandah, and through the corridor into my room."

"The ayah had preceded me there, and was busy with preparations for the night. I did not question her, but I was sure she had seen the light. I was certain that she had seen or heard of it before."

"After she had made everything ready, she went to sleep in her own little bed, near Zulieka. All the house was still; every door and window secure; the screens fastened, and only those windows open that are above, to admit the air."

"I went to your rooms and looked for the keys where I knew you usually keep them; no keys were there. I then thought of the duplicates I had loaned to the secretary, and went to his office and his room, but could find no keys. I then tried the door of the lower room of the tower; it was locked, and all doors leading to that door were locked except the one opening into your corridor, my love."

"Excitement gave me courage, or something that resembled courage, and I stepped out into the garden and looked toward the tower. All was darkness. The outlines of two towers, and all the turrets of the whole building were clearly to be traced against the sky."

"I went back to my room; in passing I lifted the *purdah* that divides my corridor from where the women were sleeping; all was still. On entering my own rooms, the ayah started up, and said: 'My lady is ill; she does not sleep.' But I told her to rest near the babe, and I thought I would watch."

"At last I loosened my robe and my hair, and threw myself upon the couch to think."

"A sense of drowsiness, totally out of keeping with my watchful, anxious, excited state, then took possession of me; I actually slept."

ZELDA'S DREAM.

After an interval of a few hours, during which Armand could, with difficulty, constrain his impatience, and concentrate his mind upon his duties, he again hurried to Zelda's side, and she resumed: "I dreamed that I saw my father—not as he was when my mother lived on earth, and he was the host, and you, my beloved, were our honored guest; not as he was when robed in the white

garments of Persia when he appeared in festive halls or at ceremonial receptions, but more as he used to seem when in his own study, with his close-fitting *topce*, and his long Persian robe and fine sandals; when he was wont to call me to his side, and, having kissed my forehead, would motion to me to sit on the low seat by his knees and hear him read and explain the Sacred Zend."

"On the night of my dream his eyes were deep and earnest, his face pale, and he was thin in flesh. He wore a long, dark mantle and robe that completely covered his form, and would have hidden his face had he not removed the hood."

"He bent over me with a gaze of ineffable tenderness, and extended his hand above me as if in blessing. He then spoke in a deep, tender and loving voice, I thought with an accent of pity: 'My child, my Zelda—mine when I dwelt as others do in the house of the senses, and mine in *essence* (or soul) when I dwelt in the kingdom of Ormuzd. It is not permitted to those who dwell with our order, apart from the world, to mingle with those of their own flesh and blood, or to recognize the ties of earthly kinship, but in this way I can come to thee, since thy senses are asleep and thou seest me with the eye of the soul alone."

"I may not tell thee where I dwell, nor whither my feet wander with my tenement. To-night I meet thee spirit to spirit. I know all thy joys, thy perfect love, thy perfect happiness. I know all thy future, except such as the Most High holds only in divine keeping."

"Three things I leave with thee forever and ever: First, my blessing for thee and thine (thy husband, thy child, thine attendants). Second, these phials, that contain drops distilled from the choicest flowers and healing herbs; one cures all pain, one bringeth sleep, and one—but thou wilt read the directions carefully written, and placed around each phial. Third, and last, I leave this chalice of sacred fire, with oils that will last during thine and thy husband's earthly life, and during the earth-life of thy child, for one drop will suffice for many days."

"He then disappeared, and when I awoke the sun was shining."

Zelda's emotions had almost prevented her from speaking.

"Most wonderful! most beautiful!" exclaimed Armand. "And the symbols that he gave you were so typical of his loving care."

"Symbols?" responded Zelda; "they are here—his 'love and blessing' in this package, which must not be opened until we are in England; these phials, with suitable inscriptions, this chalice with its sacred fire, and the oils, all—all are here."

"And you know not, beloved, whether you saw him in body or spirit; you know not whence he came, nor whither he has gone?" asked Armand, eagerly, and then overcome by emotion, he looked upon the mysterious packages containing the three blessings, and fervently exclaimed: "Oh, my friend! my brother—father—teacher! I, too, would see thy face and hear thy voice; but thou canst not come to me, either when I am waking or when I am sleeping. Thou hast gone thy sacred way, but the blessings of thy presence, thy love, abides with us."

THE DEPARTURE.

Every preparation had been made for leaving Montrose Towers. Armand would not permanently part with the place endeared by so many hallowed associations, such sacred happiness and love.

He arranged with a friend whose official duties were at Colombo, to make the Towers his place of residence during most of the year, the servants and belongings to remain as they left them; Armand and Zelda only taking their personal effects, their plate, jewelry, and the articles of *virtu* most prized for their association or value.

Hiejo, the silent secretary, the English secretary and two personal attendants were to accompany them. Zelda would have her faithful ayah, who refused ever to leave her or the babe; an English maid, and Hiejo, upon whom she could rely for everything.

The entire household, the whole town—in fact, the whole island were in mourning. Never was native, prince, king or ruler loved as was Armand; never any goddess of the island more adored than was Zelda. The fair island Singalese was to be bereft.

From the verandah to the gateway, from the gateway to the town, from the town to the quay, every foot, nay, every niche of the way was paved with palm-leaves and flowers, branches of the sacred vine, spicy shrubs, and most rare and fragrant blossoms.

The most beautiful of all the elephants known in that island, where they abound, white as snow, garlanded with rarest blossoms and leaves, surrounded by the most gorgeous of all the *howdahs* ever seen in the island, with the most careful and experienced *mahouts*, were placed at Zelda's service, and a company of the native guards were sent to escort them to the quay, while the babe, Zulieka, had a chariot of her own, in which she rode in the arms of her proud ayah, and drawn by two milk-white steers, whose necks were garlanded with vines and flowers.

No king and queen and princess of orient or occident ever left a kingdom of more loyal, loving and mourning subjects than these three, who reigned in the hearts of all whom they knew, left on that day.

The women thronged around and clasped the knees of Zelda, and kissed her garments. Armand rode a snowy Arabian horse, from which he alighted at the quay, and was almost borne upon the shoulders and in the arms of the usually undemonstrative Singalese, while the resident officials of the English government, as well as merchants, traders, and men of all ranks and conditions, expressed their respect, reverence and sorrow.

A SUDDEN CHANGE.

Very unexpectedly, at the last moment, and adding to their deep sympathy for others, a deeper sorrow of their own, came despatches from England that compelled Armand to change his plans—to go to Calcutta and through India instead of direct to England.

Almost prostrated by this news, Zelda at first thought she could not bear it. Armand thought it impossible; he could not again be parted from his heart's treasures; yet when had he ever shrunk from the call of duty?

The welfare and possibly the lives of thousands depended upon his fulfilling the requirements of the government. He could not take Zelda and the babe across India. He could not leave her in Ceylon; he could not accompany her.

There, at the water's edge, both waiting, with flags floating, were ships for their precious burthens. Before the assembled throng Armand took Zelda in his arms, folded her in one heart-breaking embrace, took his babe in his arms and kissed her most tenderly, and in silence passed to one ship; silently, and as pale as the lily she resembled, Zelda, accompanied by her attendants, passed on board the other ship.

Silently the multitude waved their adieux from the quay, and from every eminence flags floated and were lowered in symbol of the grief of those left behind.

One ship sailed eastward and northward, one sailed westward and northward. Amid parting salutes and waving banners that they did not see, Armand and Zelda stood each at the stern of the ship that bore them from each other, and gazed and stretched out their arms until they could not see; then Zelda cried out: "O, my beloved!" and was borne to her cabin.

STILL WAITING.

Since they thus parted six months had passed; so swiftly hastening when love-presence counts not the rosy-winged hours nor days that glide unwatched into nights that leave no shade, and weeks merge and melt into waxing and waning moons.

To Zelda, waiting in the long twilight of the English winter, to Armand, pressing forward 'neath the burning tropic sun, the days seemed like months, the months like ages of time.

Would the time of parting never end? Would the day of his coming ever dawn? So questioned Zelda again and again. Would he see the face and form of his beloved? Would his heart be lifted of this great load of longing to see her, hear her voice, fold her

again to his heart? Ever present but parted love; would his banishment never end?

LADY MELVILLE.

She was sitting before the fire, from which shone a ruddy and cheerful light.

Her hair was snowy-white, and smoothly brushed away from the high forehead.

Her face bore few marks of the years that had passed over her head—three-score-and-five on this very day, the 25th of March; and it was on this day, twenty-five years ago, that Margaret, her heart's delight, the daughter of her love, had married the noble and devoted Parsee; on this day, five years ago, that her own beloved husband, Lord Melville, had died.

"And now," mused she, "most wonderful of all things are the ways of God's providence—I have lived to see my daughter's child a mother, and mother and babe are beneath my roof, sheltered by my love and care. Poor child, she mourns for her lord. Small wonder if he is as noble as his father, the late Earl of Montrose."

She arose from her arm-chair, evincing no sign of feebleness, with a form that was still graceful and stately, well-rounded it is true, and a step as light as if she were but thirty.

Touching the bell-cord, she said to her maid who appeared in response to its summons: "Tell the maid of the Countess of Montrose to inform her ladyship that we dine at seven; that there will be three or four guests, members of our own family, and old friends who come because it is my birthday; that the dinner will be quite informal, and I do hope she will not insist on dining alone, for her presence will be a great joy to me."

A little before the hour of dinner, Zelda appeared before Lady Melville in the library, where she was waiting to receive her guests; the reception-room was far too formal a place for a family party.

"My child, how good and gracious you are to indulge me in my childish whim of having a birthday party; but you are pale, dear," and she kissed both of Zelda's cheeks tenderly, and said, with sympathy in her voice: "When the Earl of Montrose arrives I shall ask him to scold you just a little for mourning so much; but I will not scold you, it is such a blessing to have you here," and she looked at her tenderly. "How beautiful you are, Zelda; so like, and yet so unlike, your mother."

Zelda wore a white India silk, with long, flowing sleeves; a girdle of gold, and a golden band around her head; her hair gathered into a loose knot or coil at the back of her head; her dainty feet encased in golden slippers; a scarf of golden-color thrown over her shoulders; a solitary opal upon her neck. She was very—very beautiful.

"I came because it was your birthday, my dear mamma," (Zelda had reserved the title of grandmamma for Zulieka to speak.) "May you be long spared to us; may every birthday grow brighter," and as she kissed Lady Melville's forehead she fastened a beautiful brooch of diamonds and emeralds upon her dress. "Wear this for my sake—and Armand's."

"May the Lord watch over and guide him, and bring him safely to our shores. I shall prize this as the gift of your love, dear," replied Lady Melville.

The four other guests were then announced.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII.

Howdah: The raised seat on which one rides the elephant.
Mahout: Elephant driver.
Singalese: The original name of Ceylon; hence the natives are called Singalese.
Purdah: The curtain which separates the women's apartments from other portions of the building.
Topce: A hat, or sort of head-dress.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Mystical Numbers, Especially the Number Twelve

INSPIRATIONAL DISCOURSE

BY AN ANCIENT SAVANT.

Given Through the Organism of MRS. CORA L. V. RICHMOND.

(CONTINUED.)

Triangles are formed, and have no meaning save a mathematical one. Geology is cold, lifeless, devoid of those subtle meanings that once made every angle and curve a symbol and synonym of human thought. Some vague attempt to return to the ancient methods is found in your phonetic system of language; but the ancient hieroglyphs were exact impersonations of sound and form and mathematical accuracy.

No word or sentence was there conveyed that was not intended as a thought, and each thought was crystallized by the ancient language for the purpose of shaping it into such form as would be harmonious with the revolution of stars; with the movements of planets; with the adaptation and shape of growth upon the earth. Therefore, when language or human expression was discovered, it was made amenable in those days to the laws known to exist with reference to man, the planetary system, and the first principles of life.

Passing to the spiritual, twelve angels preside over the earth in each successive dynasty, every Messiah leaving an angel who has charge of some portion of the earth's inhabitants that are to follow. There are twelve also in the groups of angels, forming a distinct sphere or household, and this extends to all spiritual states that are amenable to the angelic control. The terrestrial spirits move in larger or smaller numbers, because they have not yet attained the perfect degree of harmony. While seven is the nominal number of perfect harmony, and the complete octave is attained by the repetition of the first note, at the eighth note it will be found that a better degree of harmony will be attained by twelve, and that the subdivision of notes into twelves will assist in obviating the discord that is now apparent even in the well-constructed instruments of this day.

When the complete octave is attained there will be twelve; and when the complete circle of human life has been perfected upon the earth there will have been discovered by those interested in pursuing this history at that time twelve distinct dynasties as important as Egypt, as great as Rome, as wonderful as Europe, as distinct as the America of to-day. These twelve will be followed on by their successive religious and spiritual dynasties, proving the complete cycle and circle of existence to be here represented.

What harmonic numbers are to sound; what repetitions of numbers are to mathematics; what the triangle and the square are to the solution of the circle; such are the various degrees and forms of human experience to the number twelve.

There are twelve distinct spiritual spheres that converge toward the earth, after which the spirit or angel no more returns to the earth, nor holds communion or converse, since they pass beyond the extreme and uttermost limits, and their thoughts are as God's. With these concentric circles there may not be atmospheric locality nor distinct limitations of space, but rather gradations of spiritual thought that constitute twelve epochs in the experiences of each mind and spirit before attaining that angelic degree.

As all gradations by the number twelve are more easy than any other, and as these represent the more natural divisions both of the cycle and of human life, so in the coming time this number will be set apart and remembered, rescued from the oblivion of past ages and the mysticism that has been thrown around it; also rescued from the ignominy of present materialism, and set enshrined in its proper place as the synonym of that which is highest and most sacred in life. Remember, you do not worship numbers, but there are those who worship God as a trinity. Remember, you are not to worship twelve, yet there are those who worship twelve, yet there are those who worship God as a unit. Remember, you are not to worship any distinct expression, but remember that the expression is but the adaptation of truth to your own minds.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

