

GENE STRATTON-PORTER
KEEPER
of the
BEEES

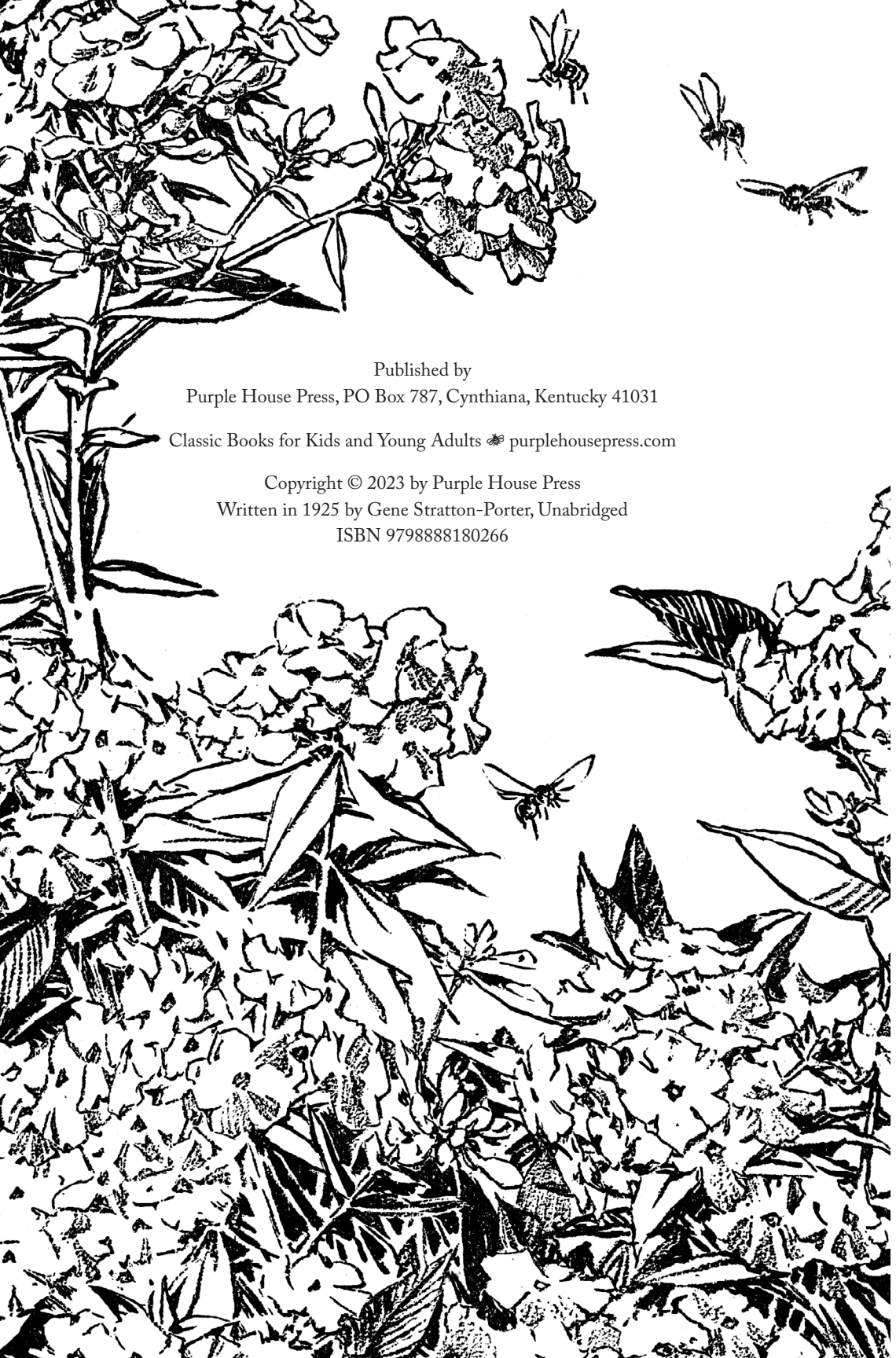
KEEPER
of the
BEEES

Gene Stratton-Porter

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TO
LITTLE GENE
WHO GAVE ME THE LITTLE SCOUT



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KEEPER
of the
BEES





HIS OWN MAN

Chapter 1



JAMES LEWIS MACFARLANE.”

The bearer of this name swung his feet to the floor and sat up suddenly, cupping his big hands over his knees to steady himself. For the past hour, between periods of half-conscious drowsiness, he had been hearing the verdict that men in authority were pronouncing upon men over whose destinies they held control; but it had not appealed to him that his own case might come under consideration.

That morning he had sat for an hour in the sunshine in front of the huge hospital where our country is trying to restore men who had been abroad to take their part in the war. Of late he had been realizing that in his fight for health he was waging a losing battle. He had not been able to combat the shrapnel wound in his left breast with the same success with which he had fought the enemy. So he had resolved to test his strength. He had gotten up and started down the road to learn precisely how far his legs would carry him. He had forgotten to reckon on the fact that going down a mountain is much easier than climbing one; so he had gone on until his knees began to waver and he found his strength exhausted. He had rested awhile and then turned back, but the upward trip had been slow business, painful work, work that set a cold perspiration running and a gnawing fire burning in his left breast, while the bandages over his shoulders and around his body had become things of torment. The hot sun of California had beaten down on him until he was panting

for breath. He was forced repeatedly to stop and to seek a resting place on any projecting stone or dry embankment of the mountainside. His tired eyes were wearied with the panorama of brilliant colour that lay stretched everywhere around him—the green of the live oak, the bright holly berries, the pinkish-white urns of the manzanita, the purplish velvet of the pitcher sage, the clotted blue-lavender cobwebs of the thistle sage. The only things he did see were the frequent heads of Indian Warrior, and he saw them because they were like wounds on the earth, as red as real blood, as red as the blood that had soaked many a battlefield, dripped in many a hospital, that he saw every day on the dressings that were removed from his side.

He had seen so much blood that anything that reminded him of it was nauseating, so he turned from the gorgeous flower eagerly painting the mountain-side, and looked up to the blue of the sky. But looking toward the sky only more clearly defined the rough path he must follow. There came to his mind a passage that he had heard his father read from his pulpit on Sabbath mornings with the burr of Scotch that a generation of our country had not eliminated: “I will lift mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help.”

He was lifting his eyes to the hills, but no help came. He wondered whether this was because he was obeying the dictates of other men, or whether it was because he had forgotten God. In his childhood his father and mother had taught him to pray and to believe that his prayers would be answered. When he had gone out to serve his country, for some inexplicable reason he had stopped praying and concentrated all his forces on fighting. There were atrocities that had been committed against men of his race and blood in the beginning of the war that drove all men of Scottish ancestry and sympathies a trifle wild.

He had reached the war period one of the gentlest of men. But he had embarked in the venture that other men of our country of different ancestry felt was freeing the world from

tyranny, with outrage in his breast, a feeling that was shared by all men of the race and country of his people. Things had happened to one certain band of Scots, that no man having a drop of Scottish blood in his veins ever could or wanted to forget. Under the stress of this feeling, the lad whose mother had always lovingly referred to him as “my Jamie” forgot her teachings and her God, and went out to see how much personal vengeance he could wreak upon the men who had wounded the heart of all Scotland deeper than the exigencies of ordinary warfare need wound the heart of a nation.

He had gone for vengeance and he had revenged himself thoroughly on many an enemy; then the hour had come when a ragged sliver of filth-encrusted iron had entered his breast and poisoned his blood. After weeks on the border land he had dragged back to his feet, and now he carried with him two wounds that would not heal, one in his heart that the world could not see, and one on his breast over which doctors and nurses vainly laboured.

When it was definitely settled that he could not go back to service he was sent home. There another wound was added to the already deep ones that were torturing him. During the three years of his absence the frail little mother, eaten with fear and anxiety for her only son, had made her crossing, and his father, always dependent upon her, had not long survived. The small property had been sold to pay for their resting places, and nothing remained in all this world that belonged to him—neither relative nor fireside. Even his friends had scattered, and there was nothing for him but to remain a ward of the Government until such time as he was pronounced able to begin life again for himself.

In recognition of valiant service, indicated by a couple of medals and a Service Bar pinned over the wound he carried, he had been sent to California, where it was hoped that the brilliant sunshine, the fruits, and the clean salt air, the eternal summer of a beneficent land, would work the healing that the physicians had

been unable to bring about. He had been given the benefit of the best place there was to send men in his condition. The mountain resort, Arrowhead Springs—high on a mountain covered with the foliage of every tree, bush, and vine native to such a location, where the air was perfumed with flowers and full of bird song—the Government had taken and had made into a great hospital; and the reason for the location was that at this point Nature brought to the surface a stream of boiling-hot water, water so hot that it was not possible to thrust the hand into it, water that boiled from some cavern below where the unquenched fires that are always burning in the heart of the earth flamed their reddest and the streams came up with the tang of sulphur and many chemicals and with unvarying heat year after year. The springs were piped through the hospital, where all their medicinal properties were turned upon the men who, like Jamie MacFarlane, must be healed of stubborn wounds before they could return home to take up a man's work in the affairs of our land.

As he struggled up the mountain that morning the perspiration, streaked his cheeks. While his knees wavered and his white hands clutched at any tree or shrub that offered support, James MacFarlane was thinking. He was thinking fast and thinking deeply. He was wondering, since one year at these boiling mineral springs had done him no good whatever, whether another year would accomplish what the first had failed in doing. He was wondering if he were not weaker, less of a man, than he had been a year ago. He was wondering how long the Government was going to keep him at these springs when their water did him no good. He knew of the bitter denunciations that were being made all over the country of those in charge of caring for our returned soldiers. He knew of the red tape, the graft, and the slowness involved in reaching the boys with the treatment that they needed and which should have been accorded them with all the speed that was used in starting them on their perilous venture. He knew there was bitterness in the heart of almost every wounded man

on this point. There was poignant bitterness in his own heart. So many weeks had been wasted. So many months had passed before decision had been made as to what was to be done, and how it was to be done, and where it was to be done. So much had been taken for granted and so little efficiently accomplished after peace had been declared.

In his enforced moments of rest, he kept lifting his eyes to the sky. He could not look at the sky without his thoughts climbing very high, and sometimes that morning they almost skirted the foot of the throne. He realized that he would have given anything in this world if he could have gone home and knelt at the knees of his mother, laid his head on her lap, and tried the one thing that he had not yet tried—just the plain, old-fashioned thing of asking God for the help he had not been able to secure from man.

And so at last he had reached the palms and roses, the loquats and oranges, and the grape-covered slopes where cultivation had begun to provide food for those who lived on the mountain-top. He looked at the bloom-laden orchards almost with distaste. He was so tired. The air was sickeningly sweet with the penetrant and enduring perfume. He thought with impatience that he would be glad if his eyes might rest upon some spot where a blood-red flare would not strike them to bitter memory, for persistently around the rocks of the mountain-side, close to the spots of cultivation in which each tree was rooted, there blazed the flame of the Indian Warrior. So he had at last dragged up the driveway and up the front steps where he had done a thing that was not customary.

All the grounds and the side verandas were for the men, but disabled soldiers were not supposed to drape themselves over the reed davenport near the big entrance doors. There happened to be a davenport standing under a broad window at one side of the entrance that offered him the first solution of a resting place. He glanced at several automobiles he did not recognize as he climbed the steps; then he headed straight for the lounge and stretched



himself on it, where for a time he lay unconscious of what was going on around him.

As he became rested, voices on the inside of the window at first were only voices, and then, as his heart quieted and the burning in his side eased and his tired limbs relaxed, he realized that name after name was being read from a list and each name represented a man whose case was being discussed and what was eventually to be come of him was being decided upon. But he had not realized as they went down the J's and the K's and the L's that M was coming soon. He had been in the hospital so long; he was so accustomed to his room, to his nurses, to the routine, and the men he knew, that the place was home, the only home on earth he had. Everyone had been kind. He had no fault to find with the doctors or the nurses. They had done their best, and he had done his best; but the truth remained that he was no better, that lately doubts had arisen as to whether he were even as well as he had been when he came. And then, with all the suddenness of an unexpected blow, clear on his ears came his own name, in that cold, impersonal tone of business men transacting an affair of business with an eye single to the welfare of the greatest good to the greatest number. He did not recall ever having heard his name spoken in precisely such tones before. It made him feel as if he were not a man, but merely an object. And then he realized that the matter under discussion was the disposal of that particular object. He heard his place of enlistment, his war service, his awards, a description of his wounds recited in such a monotonous tone that he realized it was being droned from a book, and then a brisker voice inquired:

“How long has MacFarlane been here?”

The answer came: “A little more than a year.”

Then the question: “Have the springs done him any good? Is he better?”

Then the answer: “Not so well. His wound is stubborn and in spite of all we can do it refuses to heal.”

The sweat of Jamie's exertion had dried up on his body but it broke out again with the next question.

“Is he tubercular?”

And the answer was: “No. Not yet. But he is in a condition where at any minute tuberculosis might develop. There never was more fertile ground for it.”

Jamie MacFarlane sat gripping his knees and licking his dry lips and waiting to hear the verdict. It came in few words.

“Send him to Camp Kearney.”

For a minute the red of the Indian Warrior flamed before the eyes of the listening man until he could only see red. For a minute hot anger seared his body in scorching protest. He had heard them say that he was not tubercular, but that he was fine breeding ground for the dread disease. Now they were planning to send him into a place where every man either had the plague, or was so near it that he had been sent to take the risk of contracting it, as was proposed in his case. It was not fair! It was not just! He had enlisted early and eagerly. He was not a drafted man. He had fought to the limit of his power. He had taken whatever came uncomplainingly. The medals he wore attested his daring. He would march into that room and he would tell those doctors what he thought of them and their callous decision.

He tried to rise and found that he was too weak to stand on his feet, and then he heard the doctor who had read off the names voicing a protest in his behalf: “I can hardly feel that it is fair to send a man of MacFarlane's achievements and in his fertile condition to what is admittedly a place for the tubercular.”

The other voice answered: “If a year here has left him not so well as he was, why hope that another year will do more than keep him in the place of a physically better man who might come in and make a recovery if he had MacFarlane's chance?”

At the cold justice of that statement Jamie MacFarlane sank on the lounge and lay back on the pillow, and of how long he lay there he kept no count. He only knew that the voices were going

on inside of the window and that men were being judged, that hopeless cases were being sent to what appealed to him as a hopeless place, while those who had a chance were being given the greatest opportunity to recover. And that was fair; that was just. But being of Scottish extraction, having been born with a fight in his veins and an eternal and steadfast love of the mountains and the stars and the sky and the sea and his fellow men, he decided that he would no longer be any man's man or the man of any government. He was alone and derelict. He would be his own man. If he must die, why die in Camp Kearney where the greatest plague that ravages humanity gnawed in the breast of every doomed man? Without time for mature deliberation, without any preparation whatever, James Lewis MacFarlane reached up and gripped the window sill with one hand, with the other laid hold on an arm of the couch and brought himself to a standing posture. He retraced his steps down to the roadway, and there he turned to the right, which faced him toward the north, and with slow, careful steps, he began his Great Adventure.



IN THE GARDEN OF THE BEES

Chapter 4

It was afternoon of the following day before James MacFarlane awoke, and he did not regain consciousness feeling either refreshed or invigorated. On trying to assume a sitting posture he discovered that he was sore through and through, that every bone in his body ached with an ache that was nearly intolerable, and when he set his feet on the floor and examined them carefully and then looked at his shoes, he realized that the shoes were not going to contain the feet for some time to come.

Remembering the Bee Master's offer of clothing and his bed, he hobbled through the house until he found the bedroom, and he uttered a thankful exclamation when he stumbled into the bathroom adjoining. A thorough soaking in hot water with a cold shower afterward helped considerably with the ache and the soreness. He borrowed of underclothing he found in a chiffonier in the bedroom to make himself comfortable, and a pair of moccasins on a shelf were the thing for his feet.

Then the scent of cooked food assailed his nostrils, and as he came into the living room, he had at the door his first vision of Margaret Cameron.

Margaret Cameron did not in the least resemble Jamie's mother, but she resembled a woman who might well have been typical of a universal mother, and exactly the right kind of a mother at that. Her face was beautiful with a severely cut beauty that always indicates an indomitable spirit. With one glance at

Margaret Cameron one would have been safe in arriving at the conclusion that she would be drawn and quartered before she would renounce her religion, her country, her political opinions, or her family. She was tall; she carried no ounce of superfluous flesh. Her hair was white and her eyes were blue. There was colour in her lips and cheeks. She looked wonderful to Jamie when she smiled at him.

“I had a ring from Doctor Grayson this morning,” she said. “He thought you would be sleeping and he didn’t want to waken you. He told me you were to take care of things here until the Bee Master comes back to us. I never was sorrier about anything than I was over being away when he was stricken. A young relative of mine needed me sorely; there was death in her family and I was forced to go to her.”

“I think,” said Jamie, “that I found everything the Bee Master required and I believe there was no time lost.”

There was a hint of finality in the slight gesture in which Margaret Cameron threw out her hands.

“I haven’t a doubt,” she said, bluntly, “but the Bee Master had everything he needed. There is no one on earth who wouldn’t do anything Michael Worthington wanted. The point is that he was forced to call on a stranger for help that I, as his friend of long standing, would have loved to give.”

“I see,” said Jamie, quietly. “I am sorry you weren’t here. I think you are right about any one doing anything he asked, because here I am, and any one less suited for what he asked of me couldn’t have been found in the State. But because he asked it, I am here to try.”

A dry smile crossed Margaret Cameron’s face. Her eyes narrowed as they followed a line of vision that carried through the living room, through the combination kitchen and dining room, across the back porch and out to unmeasured leagues of the sea beyond—the Pacific Sea, the peaceful ocean that smiles and lures and invites and so very seldom shows the fangs and the jaws of the monster that lies lurking in its depths.

“I understand,” she said, quietly. “I know why you are here and I can see that you are not fit for work. Doctor Grayson mentioned that you looked mighty seedy. He thought you might have been one of ours, across.”

Jamie ran his fingers in his pocket and produced a Service Bar and two decorations for valour and held them toward her, and Margaret Cameron came forward and took his unsteady white hand in both of hers and said: “God love you, boy! I’ve got the Bee Master’s routine by heart myself, and while I don’t know as much about the bees as he has really been making a business of teaching the little Scout, I know enough to show you where the water pans are and how to keep them filled with the right combination of water—strange, but they like a sprinkle of salt in it—and I can go over the flowers with you and show you which need the most water and when. I think if you rest a few days, you can make it all right, and I will cook your meals as I always have cooked the Bee Master’s. Only you might as well tell me what you particularly like and how you want it. No two people have tastes alike.”

“That’s mighty good of you,” said Jamie. “I am ready to confess that I am ravenous this minute and whatever you have brought will be fine, I am sure.”

So he went into the kitchen and ate the food that Margaret Cameron had provided for him. He learned how to operate the gas stove in case he wanted a hot drink at any time. He was shown where a small ice chest stood on the back porch in which there was daily deposited a bottle of cream and a bottle of milk, and he noticed a basket of eggs and some fruit, and then together they went over the garden and he located the different hose attachments and was given exhaustive instructions about watering the flowers.

Noticing how very unsteady he was on his feet and how terribly those members were swollen, seeing his thin white hands with the blue veins standing in ridges, Margaret Cameron drew her own conclusions. As they came up the back walk she

advanced very slowly to give Jamie time to keep up with her, and when they reached the back door, she asked of him: "Are you bee immune?"

Jamie looked at her in a speculative silence for a moment, pondering that question, and then he said: "I'm not at all sure that I know what you mean by 'bee immune.'"

"Why, I mean," said Margaret Cameron, "that there are people in this world whom bees won't tolerate. There are people to whom it would mean certain and mighty unpleasant death to go down either side line of this garden. There are people whom a bee naturally hates, and there are others with whom they instantly make friends. One man may lift the roof of a hive and scoop up a handful of working bees. There's a man who comes to help the Bee Master sometimes who carries bees around in the crown of his hat. But that doesn't prove that they are a safe proposition for everyone."

Jamie thought that over.

"How do I go about finding out whether I am 'bee immune'?" he asked, as he leaned against the casing facing the woman before him and noting that she was almost his own height.

"Right there," said Margaret Cameron, "is where the little Scout comes in. There isn't anything the Bee Master knows about bees that he hasn't carefully passed on to his side partner—his first assistant. I imagine you will have a visitor to-day or to-morrow. If you don't, I will telephone. Take my advice and keep away from the hives until you get your instructions."

Then Margaret Cameron gathered into a basket the dishes that Jamie had been using, crossed the side yard, and through a small gate entered her own premises.

Jamie stood and watched her going to a low white house that seemed cheerful and homelike, that appeared as if it might have required the same amount of labour and the same length of time to construct, and yet, in some way, lacked the luring charm of the home of the Bee Master.

Refreshed by the food, Jamie went out to the middle of the road and stood looking at the house and grounds. There was such a slight variation in the width of the eaves and the angle of the roof, one could scarcely have told where lay the difference between it and the other houses that stretched away down the street.

As he stood studying it, Jamie had difficulty in defining the difference to himself. Maybe it was the setting, the whitewashed paling fence, and the quaint sloping veranda. Maybe it was the particular colour of paint that preserved the wood. Maybe it was the rare vines, the odorous shrubs, the gay flowers clambering everywhere with absolutely no hint of order or precision. Anyway, there was something about the house shaded by tall eucalyptus trees and lacy jacqueranda, with its gaudy surrounding carpet of blue flower magic that gave to it, Jamie could think of no other term, a welcoming face. It seemed to be a human thing and it seemed to smile the warmest kind of welcome.

Then Jamie looked beyond it to the scintillating blue of the sea and the equal blue of the sky, and then he looked higher. He stood there thinking intently, and before he realized what he was doing, he had repeated a phrase in his father's tongue that he had used a few days before: "You are unco gude to me, Lord!"

Then Jamie smiled through misty eyes at the house, and he went into it, carefully noting the side seats and the delicate vines trained over the veranda. He looked at the rugs on the floors and decided that they were Persians of antiquity and price. He was unschooled in rug lore. He knew that the furniture was antique and priceless. He ran his fingers appreciatively over pieces of rosewood and mahogany that were old and shining from use and that had been designed by master craftsmen long ago, across far seas.

The bookcases, ranging from floor to ceiling almost around the room, held his attention for a few moments, and then he stopped before a writing desk, open, the quill of the Master in

the small horn holder of shot, the sheets of an unfinished letter lying on the pad. With that fineness inherent in the heart of a gentleman of Scotland, Jamie picked up the sheets, lifted the pad, laid them face down on the mahogany of the writing desk and returned the pad to its place. The letter would lie there untouched until the return of the Bee Master.

Then Jamie's eyes wandered to the case above the writing desk. He had been reading names prominent in literature from the beginning, but each volume in that small case seemed to be either completely concerning or in some way related to bees. At one instant Jamie's hand lifted to open one of the doors. Probably its weight roused him to the fact that he had better rest a few more days before he began on a task that might he over quickly or might be long. In detail he went through the adjoining sleeping room, noting its neatness, the precision of its arrangement, the delicate beauty of the etchings and engravings, the rareness of the books that lay here and there, the quiet grace of the furnishings.

He went back through the kitchen and the back porch and came out into the open shine of the afternoon sun. He was thin enough and cold enough to love its warmth.

As he stood there looking down the stretch of the garden to the sea, he thought it comprised the most beautiful picture that he had ever seen. It covered two acres of the Sierra Madres where they meet the Pacific. A crude walk, fashioned from stones collected from the mountain-side, ran in steps down to the beach below. There was a pergola loaded with grapes as they are allowed to run in the gardens of the East but lavishly among them grew wisteria and clematis, roses and vines and vines whose names, habits, or flowering, he did not know. On either hand, sometimes with abrupt juttings of big rocks, sometimes in tiny fertile plateaus, sometimes on gentle slopes, there grew every fruit tree that loves to flourish in the soil and sun of California—loquats and figs, oranges and lemons, plums and peaches, pears and nectarines,

dates and grapefruit—only a tree or two of each, and between and beneath them tiny cultivated beds of vegetables.

Prominently bordering the walk halfway down the mountain-side, staked and rankly growing, Jamie's eye was caught by a blare of purple-red where stalks of tomatoes lifted huge fruits, some of them bursting with ripeness, and on either hand everywhere, bushes, shrubs, vines and flowers, and flowers, and yet more flowers, and because Jamie recognized nearly each one of these, he knew they were the quaint, old-fashioned flowers that his mother and his grandmother had grown. There were Madonna lilies that, in the warm soil and the luring sunshine, had opened to bloom at two and three feet less height than in the cold gardens of the East. Carpeting around them were beds of cinnamon pinks, touching the fresh salt air with their spicy sweetness, mignonette and heliotrope, forget-me-nots and great blue blooms of myrtle the like of which Jamie never had seen—a whole world of flowers and fruit.

On either hand, steadily, slowly, came the low hum of millions of working bees—bees hived, not in the ugly flat houses used in numberless apiaries he had passed on his journey, but each stand in a separate spot raised above the earth on a low platform and having a round pointed roof that gave to the hives a beauty, a quaintness, an appropriateness to the location. On close examination Jamie found that each hive stood in a bed of myrtle blue as the sky. And then he saw that back of the hives the fences were a wall of the blue of plumbago, delicate sheets of it. And above, one after another, great lacy jacquerandas lifting clouds of blue to the heavens. And then he realized that, facing the hives, around and near them, there was a world of blue: blue violets, heliotrope, forget-me-nots, blue verbenas, blue lilies, larkspur, bluebells, phlox, blue vervain, blue and yet more blue. Past his head and face, lured by the reds and brilliant colours around the house, darted the jewel-throated and crowned humming birds,

but the bees lived in a whole world of blue. It seemed as if the blue flowers dearly loved to creep up to these white hives, to vine around them, to cling to them, to bloom above them. Alone, close to the back walk, Jamie noticed several big hives that stood by themselves where he would have to pass within the distance of a few feet when he made his first journey the length of the garden, out of the gate and across the strip of sand to where the ocean, in a great bay, came lapping up the shore and then slid back again, gently, softly, with only a low murmur song that would be the finest thing in the world to lull a tired man to sleep.

Slowly, with wavering feet, Jamie made his way across the back end of the house. Under a jacqueranda tree on the east side, he saw the most attractive bench. So he went and sat upon it at just the precise spot where the branches of the tree threw a mottled shade over his head and left his lean body stretched in the sunshine. He sat and tried to think. Because the sky was so beautiful, and the sea was so beautiful, and the garden was so pain fully beautiful, there came to him the old thought he had dragged around for the past two years: How much longer? How much time had he, anyway? How soon was the sky going to lose her eternal verity and the sea to cease smiling, and flower faces and bird song and the hum of the bee and the chirp of the cricket—how soon were they to be over for him?

Because he had tried himself so sorely, because he was so desperately strained and over-tired from his journey, he was not very hopeful. Everything concerning himself looked the blackest it ever had. The bandages that he had removed for his bath bore brilliant stains, telling anew the story of angry wounds that refused to heal. So that afternoon Jamie's individual case seemed more hopeless to him than it had seemed when he had arisen in hot rebellion and walked out from the protection of his government. But the irony of the whole thing was that, when for himself matters could scarcely have been blacker, all

inadvertently he had fallen into one of the most exquisite beauty spots that the face of the world had to boast.

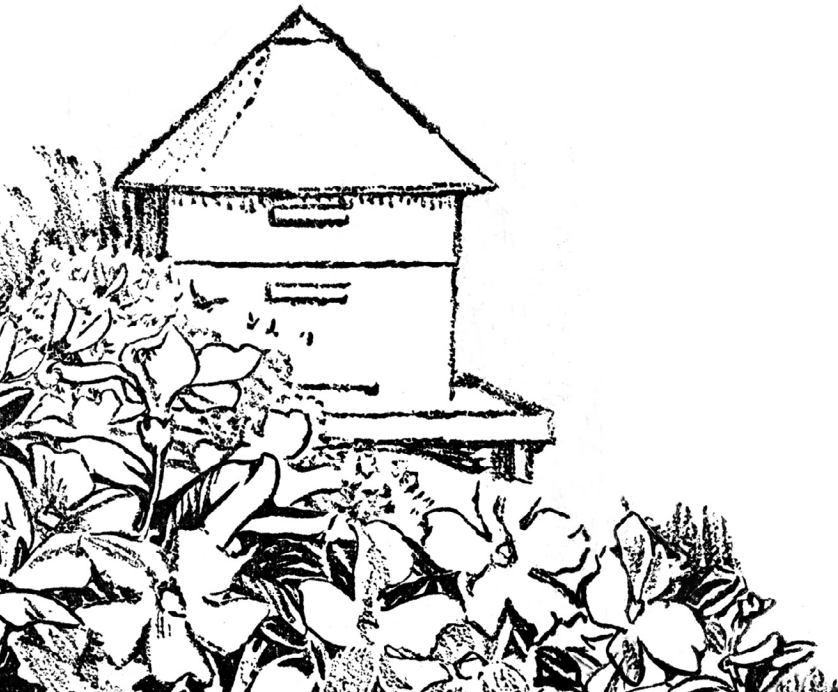
There are only a few places where love and artisanship build a small house with a welcoming face. There are only a few places where love and good horse sense build a garden, half of wildings and half of quaint old-fashioned things that evolved without the help of crossing and fertilization and other makeshifts that produce growth so rampant and sizable that it is difficult to believe that the blooms are living things. There are only a few places where the side of a mountain walks down, and slides down, and jumps down, and meanders winding, flowering ways until it reaches the white sands of a brilliantly blue sea, and it is easy to believe that such a location would naturally be the home of tiny round white houses with round roofs where millions of bees make honey to sweeten the food of a world.

It is easy to see that the hum of the bees and the scent of the flowers would draw the birds to a place like this, and across any stretch of ocean shore line there is bound to be the wide sweep of great gray pelicans and the black-winged aningas, and the wild ducks, the snow-white of the gulls and the scimitar-winged sea swallows, like birds of carved ivory, arching and sailing for pure love of blue sky and blue water and to indulge the powers of flight. There are bound to be Mother Carey's chickens and little stilt-legged sandpipers and killdeers tilting along the shore, and there are sure to be little children digging in the sand, and grown folk having an hour of pleasure stretched in the sunshine, asking earth to heal their bodies and the Sun God to heal their hearts.

As Jamie sat on the bench under the jacqueranda feeling so ill that the tears of self-pity were stinging the lids of his wide gray eyes, he vaguely wondered what it would do to him if he were to go down to the sea and soak his body in the cold salt water and let the sun drive home every medicinal property that

sea water contains. He had tried a year of hot water from the boiling bowels of the earth. How would it do to try a year of cold water from the seas of the surface and the sun of the heavens?

Jamie's lips twisted bitterly. He was probably as near Heaven as he ever would be until Heaven passed him by, and it might be that only a few days would end his tenure of the little white house and the mountain garden, and it would be his lot to move on until his case grew even more desperate than it was at that minute.



Jamie, doing his best on "Highland Mary," went slowly the round of the hives.