

**PRETTY ROSE HALL,  
OR, THE  
POWER OF LOVE**

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Pretty Rose Hall, or, The power of love by Miss Laura Jean Libbey

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ROSE HALL

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THE POWER OF LOVE

BY

*MISS LAURA JEAN LIBBEY*



A & L  
SERIES

THE  
ARTHUR WESTBROOK  
COMPANY

CLEVELAND, OHIO, U. S. A.

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# PRETTY ROSE HALL

OR

## The Power of Love

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### CHAPTER I.

"Rose—Rose! where can she be? Aunt Hulda will be so very angry with her when she discovers what she has done."

The words were uttered in a sweet anxious voice, by a fair-haired young girl in a blue sailor suit, with a sailor hat crushed down over her fair curls, who ran lightly down the narrow strip of beach to the water's edge, and shading her tear-swollen blue eyes with her little white hands, looked eagerly over the vast expanse of wave rippling and dancing under the golden light of the June sunshine.

"It is almost noon and Rose has been gone since early morning; what could have detained her? what if anything has happened to her, our beautiful, daring, willful Rose!"

Lillian Hall's heart gave a quick terrified throb at the bare thought.

With a thoughtful face she turned and retraced her steps to the old light-house, that stood like a monu-

ment in gray stone on this little island on the Maine coast.

Lillian and Rose Hall were the nieces of Abel Martin, the old light-house keeper. A strange mystery shrouded their presence here. Why two young and startlingly lovely girls were forced to dwell within the dreary walls of the isolated old light-house, where no human eye, save that of Abel Martin and his wife Hulda, ever dwelt upon their wondrous beauty, is the story we have to tell.

Lillian was seventeen; Rose a year younger.

Lillian was sweet and good with the fair beauty of an angel, but Rose—ah, how shall I find words to describe the dark, passionate, glowing beauty of Rose Hall—the young girl whose life held so tragic a story. A dark, piquant, dimpled face; cheeks and lips as crimson as the glowing heart of the flowers whose name she bore; great, dark, velvety, Oriental eyes shaded by the longest and silkiest of lashes, a low, broad brow crowned with rings of curling love-locks, darker than a raven's plume, and a saucy smiling mouth that seemed made only for love's sweet kisses, and rippling laughter.

Lillian was gentle and good. Rose, gay, dashing, restless Rose, was full of faults; at once the torment and darling of the light-house. With all her faults, imperious, willful, beautiful Rose, was the best loved and most carefully guarded.

On this June morning a strange event shrouded in the deepest mystery happened, which was to break up forever the peace and quiet of the inmates of the light-house on the isolated island.

Late that morning a stranger had visited the island,



placing in Abel Martin's hands a thick square package in a large official envelope, bearing a foreign post mark. The moment the old light-house keeper's eyes fell upon it—even before he took it in his shaking hands, he knew but too well what it contained, that which he most dreaded had happened at last.

Neither Lillian or Rose saw the stranger come or saw him depart. Together, with bated breath, Abel Martin and his wife, Hulda, scanned the folded slip of paper which bore their names, slowly reading the command written there.

"Oh, my God!" cried Hulda, pale as death, with intense excitement, "it is too late to think of such a thing after all these years. It must not, it shall not be. I would rather see them both dead and buried," she cried out, bitterly, covering her head with her gingham apron, and rocking herself to and fro in utter abandon. "Abel," she cried, creeping up to him and laying her trembling hand on his arm, "I am strongly tempted to throw this letter into the sea, oh, so bitterly, cruelly tempted. It would be better for both Lillian and Rose," she added, hoarsely. "No one could prove that we received it, despite what the messenger may say. It is for us to deny it."

"Duty is duty, Hulda," replied the old light-house keeper, in a voice equally as husky as her own. "Remember, the choice is left with the girls. I will stake my life upon it neither of them will decide—"

He did not finish the sentence, a light step sounded on the gravel walk outside the door, and Lillian entered.

She had quite expected to hear the question from,

her aunt's lips, "Where is Rose?" and she knew that she must answer truthfully.

"Rose has disobeyed you, Aunt Hulda, she has taken the little boat and gone out upon the water some hours since."

Then she would put her arms around Aunt Hulda's neck, and with tears in her eyes plead for pardon for beautiful, willful Rose.

To her great surprise the question was not asked, instead a startling announcement fell from her aunt's lips.

"Lillian," she said, caressing the girl's fair hair, and striving to choke back her bitter sobs and speak calmly, "I have a—a—little—surprise in store for you and Rose. You must both dress yourselves as quickly as possible, we are to start within the hour for Rocky Point. We may be gone a week, perhaps a fortnight."

Lillian looked up aghast. All her life both she and Rose had pleaded for the privilege of accompanying their aunt or uncle when they made their periodical trips to Rocky Point, and it had been strictly denied them. What prompted her aunt to propose it now she could not even conjecture.

"We can not start within the hour, aunt," she faltered, "Rose is not here," and in her gentle way she confessed what Rose had done.

She expected a torrent of rage, instead her aunt stood looking at her with a look in her eyes she could not fathom.

There was a terrible war raging just then in Hulda Martin's bosom. Had Providence a hand in absenting Rose from the island on this fatal day when all her future was at stake? Had fate a hand in it?

A swift and terrible temptation occurred to her. Why not leave Rose behind and spare her? Not but what she loved Lillian; but, ah! she loved Rose best. If Rose could but be spared!

Fiercely the battle between right and wrong waged in the woman's soul. It was over at last—wrong had triumphed over right. For weal or for woe, she had shaped Rose's fate.

"Then you and I will go, Lillian," she said, steadily. "Rose shall stop at home; we must start within the hour."

"Oh, no; let us wait for Rose!" cried gentle Lillian, in dismay. "How could I remain away from her a whole week—I, who have never been separated from her an hour in her life?"

Despite Lillian's anxious pleading, Hulda Martin was inexorable. If Rose was not on hand they would go without her.

Half an hour later they had left the island.

"By not taking Rose I have spared her," was the exultant thought that filled Hulda Martin's heart.

The boat containing Hulda Martin and Lillian had scarcely faded from sight ere a young girl came rowing over the sunlit waters in a little skiff. It was the truant Rose.

"Dear me!" she cried, tying the fluttering crimson ribbon more securely under her dimpled chin with her slim brown fingers, and puckering her jetty brows into something very like a frown, "it looks like rain—and a terrible rain-storm, too—or I should not think of going home for at least an hour yet; but Lillian will be lonely. Yes, I must go home."

Still, it was so pleasant out on the water the girl did