

"Salutations to you, O Hauiti, and also to all present! I have heard what has been said, and I thank you, Haniti. There is one thing, however, I can't understand: it is how my grandparent could have let you think I was favourable to you, and that the *tapu* was the only obstacle! Your name was not even mentioned to me till after the removal of the *tapu*. Then I promised an answer this day, and I will give it. I have asked my heart this question, and it is dark with sorrow for you, E Hauiti, because I cannot give myself to you. I love my grandparent, and in all else I would obey him; but I am

your own good I wish you to marry Haniti! I can easily see that the shadow is your *Atua*, and that he is jealous because I have taken the *tapu* from you! But I will intercede with him, and the shadow shall depart from you. Don't accept her answer to-day, Haniti, give her time, and I, Aokatoa, will see to this shadow! I have spoken!"

The audience, I could see, believed implicitly in this *Atua*-cast shadow, and also in the mighty *tohunga's* power to deal with it. The man who could remove the sacred *tapu*, could certainly propitiate a shadow. [It



THEN HAUTII ROSE TO HIS FEET IN THE CENTRE OF THE GROUP, AND ADDRESSED THE GIRL HE LOVED.

no longer a child, and, in the choice of a husband, I will be guided by my own heart only! You say a shadow has come between us. It is true; and that shadow is my *Atua*—my guardian angel, it is ever between us, and will not let my love go out to you. Press this matter no further! You have spoken as a brave man should speak, and I am truly sorry, but I will not give myself where I cannot give my love!"

Te Aokatoa rose in supreme wrath.

"How dare you declare that you cannot do what I have set my heart on? It is for

is needless to say my opinion differed, and that my spirits rose accordingly. My powerful rival had by his influence done what I was utterly unable to do. He had caused the bar, which placed the beautiful maiden beyond the reach of earthly lover, to be removed. Might I not now profit by his diplomacy? It was quite possible, and that was sufficient for the present. That tribal pressure would be brought to bear on the young damsel, I knew only too well. The match was as important for the welfare of the tribe as any European state-arranged