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Trent Canal Survey

y who are surveying the as far as Sparrow Lake. It see me little white chicken?" ale them till December to coma survey to Gamebridge. Durvioter, they are likely to arrey of Lake Simcoe, with to the preparation of a pro-

FRECKLES

Freckles' head rolled over and his eyes dropped shut. McLean's mind. traveled back to the night almost a year before when he had engaged Freckles, a stranger.

McLean bent, covering the burt arm with one hand and laying the other with a caress on the boy's forehead. Freckles stirred at his touch and twittered as softly as the swallows under the eaves.

"If you're coming this way-tomorrow-be pleased to step over-and we'll repate the chorus softly."

"Bless the gritty devil," growled Mc-

Then he went out and told Mrs. Duncan to keep close watch on Freckles and send Duncan to him at the swamp the minute he came home. Following the trail down to the line and back to the scene of the fight, the boss entered Freckles' study softly, as if his spirit sleeping there might be roused, and gazed about with astonished eyes.

How had the boy conceived it? What a picture he had wrought in living colors! He had the heart of a painter; he had the soul of a poet. The boss stepped carefully over the velvet carpet and touched the walls of crisp verdure with gentle fingers. He stood long beside the flower bed and gazed at the banked wall of bright flowers as if he could never leave off,

> CHAPTER VII. AN ANGEL MATERIALIZES.

HERE had Freckles ever found and how had he transplanted such ferns? As McLean turned from them he stopped suddenly. He had reached the door of the cathedral. That which Freckles had attempted would have been patent to any one. What had been in the heart of the shy, silent boy when he had found that long, dim stretch of forest, decorated its entrance, cleared and smoothed its aisle and carpeted its altar? What veriest work of God was in these mighty living pillars and the arched dome of green! How like stained cathedral windows were the long openings between the trees, filled with rifts of blue, rays of gold and the shifting emerald of leaves! Where could be found mosaics to match this aisle paved with living color and glowing lights? Was Freckles a devout Christian and did he worship here? Or was he an untaught heathen and down this vista of entrancing loveliness did Pan come piping and dryads, nymphs and fairles dance for him?

McLean had been thinking of Freckles as a creature of unswerving honesty, my brother Jim's place last summer. courage and faithfulness. Here was evidence of a heart aching for beauty. art, companionship, worship. It was writ large all over the floor, walls and furnishing of that little Limberlost bim a picture. Jim's so proud of what clearing.

the story of the fight, and they laughed until they cried. Then they started around the line in search of the tree. Said Duncan, "Now the boy is in for sore trouble!"

"I hope not," answered McLean. "You never in all your life saw a cur whipped so completely. He won't come back for the repetition of the chorus. We can surely find the tree. If we can't Freckles can. I will bring enough of the gang to take it out at once. That will insure peace for a time at least, and I am hoping that in month more the whole gang can be moved here. It will soon be fall, and then, if he will go, I intend to send Freckles to my mother to be educated. With his quickness of mind and body and a few years' good help he can do anything. Why, Duncan, I'd give a hundred dollar bill if you could have been here and seen for yourself."

Locating the tree was an easy task because it was so well identified. When the rumble of the lumber wagons passing the cabin on the way to the swamp wakened Freckles next morning he sprang up and was soon following them. The tree was a giant maple and so precious that they almost dug it out by the roots.

McLean had told Freckles to ride on a section of the maple with him, but now the boy begged to go into the swamp with Duncan.

"I don't see why you want to go," said McLean. "I have no business to let you out today at all." "It's me chickens, sir," answered

Freckles. Freckles burried into the swamp. He was some little distance behind, but he could still see the men. Before he overtook them they had turned from the west road and had entered the swamp toward the east. The underbrush was almost impenetrable. As they plunged into it a great black bird

swept over their heads. Freckles danced wildly. "It's me chickens! Oh, it's me chickens!" he shouted. "Oh, Duncan, come quick! You've found the nest of me precious

Duncan hurried down to the mouth of a monstrous log, but Freckles was before him. He crashed through potson vines and underbrush regardless of any danger and climbed on the stump. When Duncan got there be was shouting like a wild thing.

"It's hatched!" he yelled. "Oh, me big chicken has batched out me little chicken, and there's another egg. 1 can see it plain, and, oh, the funny for canal purposes have little white baby! Duncan, can you

Duncan could easily see it, and so could every one else. Freckles tenderly carried the hissing, blinking tittle thing out to the light in a leaf lined hat. The men found it sufficiently wonderful to satisfy even Freckles, who had forgotten he was ever sore

or stiff, and coddled over it wish every blarneying term of endearment he knew.

Duncan gathered up his tools. "Deal's off, boys!" he said cheerfully. "The log mauna be touched until Freckles' chaukies have finished with it. We might as weel gang. Better put it back, Freckles. It's just out, and it may chill. Ye will probably. hae twa the morn."

Freckles deposited the baby beside the egg. When he came back he said:

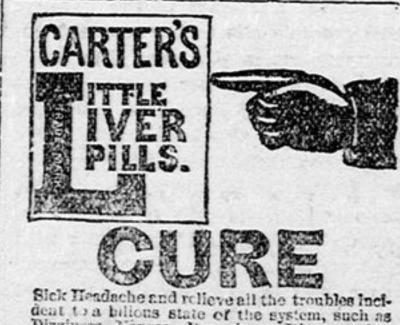


DEAL'S OFF, BOYS!" HE SAID CHEER

"I made a big mistake not to be bringing the egg out with the baby, but I was fearing to touch it. It's shaped like a hen's egg, and it's big as a turkey's, and the beautifulest blue-just splattered with big brown splotches. like me book said, precise. But you never saw such a sight as it made on the yellow of the rotten wood beside that funny leathery faced little white bahv."

"Tell you what, Freckles," said one of the teamsters. "Have you ever heard of this bird woman that goes all Who can fathom the heart of a boy? over the country with a camera and makes pictures? She made some on and Jim's so wild about them he quits plowing and goes after her about every nest he finds. He helps her all he can to get them, and then she gives he has he keeps them in the Bible. When Duncan came McLesn told him He shows them to everybody that





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comes and brags about how he help | out of the mari dredges turee and four ed to take them. If you're smart you'll at a time." send for her and she'll come and make a picture just like life. If you belp

No one ever had. to get this log lets me off till noon, and I'm going to town. If I was making a living taking bird pictures seems to me I'd be mighty glad for a hance to take one like that."

"Then you be sure to tell her to come." said Freckles.

The next morning Freckles hurried about the trail, and on his way down the east side he slipped in to see the chickens. The mother bird was on the nest. He was afraid the other egg might just be hatching, so he did not venture to disturb her. He made the round and reached his study early. He had his lunch along and did not need to start on the second trip until the middle of the afternoon. He would have long hours to work on his flower bed, improve his study and learn about his chickens.

The heat became more insistent, Noon came, and freckles ate his dinper and settled for an hour or two on asked Freckles. sne said. "The man a bench with a book.

Perhaps there was a breath of sound. Freckies could never afterward were down. We drove away in, and remember, but for some reason he it was dreadful-over stumps and logs, lifted his head just as the bushes and in to the hubs. I suppose you parted and the face of an angel look- know, though. I should have stayed ed through. Saints, nymphs and fair- in the carriage, but I was so tired. ies had floated down his cathedral never dreamed of getting lost. I susaisle for him many times, with forms and voices of exquisite beauty. Parting the wild roses by the en-

trance was beauty of which Freckles had never dreamed. Was it real or would it vanish as the other dreams had done? He took a step nearer, gazing intently. This was real flesh and blood. And it was in every way kin of the Limberlost, for no bird of ull." its branches swung with easier grace than this dainty young thing rocked on the bit of morass on which she stood. A sapling beside her was not straighter nor rounder than her slender form. Her soft, waving hair clung about her face with the heat, and curled over her shoulders. It was all of one piece with the gold of the sun which filtered through the branches. Her eyes were just the deepest blue of the iris, her lips the reddest of the foxfire, and her cheeks exactly of the same satin as the wild rose petals caressing them. She was smiling on Freckles in perfect confidence, and she cried, "Oh, I'm so delighted that I've found you!"

"An'-an' was you looking for me?" quavered the boy, incredulous.

"I hoped I might find you," said the angel. "You see, I didn't do as I was told, and I'm lost. The Bird Woman said I should stay in the carriage until she came back. She's been gone hours. It's a perfect Turkish bath in there, and I'm all lumpy with mosquito bites. Just when I thought that I couldn't bear it another minute, along comes the biggest Papillo Ajax you ever saw. I knew how pleased she'd be, so I ran after it. It flew so slow and so low that I thought a dozen times I had it. Then all at once it went out of sight over the trees, and I couldn't find my way back to save me. I think I've walked over an hour. I have been mired to my knees. A thorn raked my arm until it is bleeding, and I'm so tired and warm."

She parted the bushes still further. Freckles saw that her little blue cotton frock clung to her, imp with perspiration. It was torn across the breast. One sleeve hung open from shoulder to elbow. A thorn had raked her arm until it was covered with blood, and the gnats and mosquitoes were clustering about it. Her feet were in lace hose and low shoes.

Freckles gasped. In the Limberlost in low shoes! He caught an armful of moss from his carpet and buried it in the coze in front of her for a foot-

"Get out here where I can see where you are stepping. Quick, for the life of you!" be ordered.

She smiled on him indulgently. "Why?" she inquired.

"Did anybody let you come here and not be telling you of the snakes?"

urged Freckles. "We met Mr. McLean on the corduroy, and he did say something about

snakes, I believe. The Bird Woman put on leather leggins, and a nice, parboiled time she must be having: Worst dose I ever had, and I'd nothing to do but swelter." "Will you be coming out of there?"

groaned Freckles.

She laughed as if it were a fine joke. "Maybe if I'd be telling you I killed a rattler curied up on that same place you're standing as long as me body and the thickness of me arm you'd be moving where I can see your footing." he urged insistently. "What a perfectly delightful little

brogue you speak," she said. "My father is Irish, and half ought to be enough to entitle me to do that much. 'Maybe-if I'd-be telling you,'" she imitated, rounding and accenting each word carefully. "If you was understanding the dan-

ger," he continued desperately. "Oh, I don't think there is much!" She tilted on the morass.

"If you killed one snake here it's probably all there is near, and anyway, the Bird Woman says a rattlesnake is a gentleman and always gives warning before he strikes. I don't hear any rattling. Do you?"

"Would you be knowing it if you Carter's Little Liver Pills are very small and very easy to take. One or two pills make a dose. They are strictly vegetable and do not gripe or purge, but by their gentle action please all who use them.

did?" asked Freckles almost impatiently.

How the laugh of the young thing rippled!

"Would I be knowing it?" she mocked. "Well, you should see the swamps of Michigan where they dump rattlers

Freckles stood astounded. She did know. She was not in the least afraid. ner she will give you one. It would She was depending on a rattlesnake to be uncommon pretty to keep after your live up to his share of the contract birds are gone. I dunno what they and rattle in time for her to move. are. I never see their like before. The one characteristic an Irishman ad-They must be something rare. Any mires in a woman above all others is you fellows ever see a bird like that | courage. Freckles worshiped anew. He changed his tactics.

"I'd be pleased to be receiving you "Well," said the teamster, "failing at me front door," he said, "but as you have arrived at the back, will you come in and be seated?"

He waved toward a bench. The angel came instantly.

"Oh, how lovely and cool!" she cried. As she moved across his room kles had hard work to keep from falling on his knees, for they were very weak, and he was hard driven by an impulse

"Did you arrange this?" she asked. "Yis," said Freckles simply.

"Some one must come with a big canvas and copy each side of it," she said. "I never saw anything so beautiful. How I wish I might stay here with you! I will, some day, if you will let me; but now, if you can spare the time, will you help me look for the carriage? If the Bird Woman comes back and finds me gone she will be almost distracted." "Did you come in on the west road?"

who told the Bird Woman said that was the only place where the wires pect I will get scolded finely. I go with the Bird Woman half the time during the summer vacations. My father says I learn a lot more than I do at school, and get it straight. I never came within a smell of getting lost before. I thought, at first, it was roing to be horrid, but since I've found

CHAPTER VIIL

you, maybe it will be good fun after

THE BIRD WOMAN. RECKLES was amazed to hear himself excusing. "It was so hot in there. You couldn't be expected to bear it for hours and not be moving. I can take you back around the trail almost to where you were. Then you can get up in the carriage, and I will go find the Bird Woman."

"You'll get killed if you do! When she stays this long, it means that she has a focus on something. You see, when she gets a focus, and lies in the weeds and water for hours, and the sun bakes her, and things crawl over her, and then some one comes along and scares her bird away just as she has it coaxed up-why, she kills them. If I melt, you won't go after her. She's probably blistered and half eaten up, but she will never quit until she is satisfied."

"Then it will be safer to be taking care of you," suggested Freckles. "Now you're talking sense!" said the

"May I try to help your arm?" he "Have you any idea how it hurts?"

she parried. "A little," said Freckles. "Well, Mr. McLean said we'd probably find his son here"-

"His son!" cried Freckles. "That's what he said. And that you would do anything you could for us, gone." and that we could trust you with our lives. But I would have trusted you anyway, if I hadn't known a thing about you. Say, your father is rampaging proud of you, isn't he?"

"I don't know," answered the dazed Freckles. "He's so proud of you he is all

swelled up like the tond in Aesop's fables. If you have ever had an arm

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hurt like this and can do anything. why, for pity sake do it!"

Remember the name

Surprise

She turned back her sleeve, holding out to Freckles an arm of palest cameo. Freckles unlocked his case and bandaged the ugly, ragged wound. He worked with trembling fingers and a face tense with earnestness.

"Is it feeling any better?" he asked. "Oh, it's well now?" cried the angel WIT Ansen't hart at all any more " The velvety touch of her warm arm was tingling in Freckles' finger tips. Dainty laces and fine white stuffs peeped through her torn dress. There were beautiful rings on her fingers, Every article about her was of the finest material and in excellent taste. There was the trembling Limberlost guard in his coarse clothing, with his cotton rags and his old pail of swamp water. Freckles was sufficiently accustomed to contrasts to notice them and sufficiently fine to be hurt by them

always. He lifted his eyes to hers with a shadowy pain in them and found them of serene, unconscious purity.

"We must go and find the carriage," said the angel, rising. Freckles led the way, sharply watching every step. He went as near the log as he felt that he dared and with

a little searching found the carriage. "This is a shame!" said Freckles. "You'll never be coming here again." "Oh, yes, I shall!" said the angel. "The Bird Woman says that these birds stay over a month in the nest and she would like to make a picture every

perhaps." Freckles barely escaped crying out

"Then don't you ever be torturing yourself and your horse to be coming in here again," he said. "I'll show you a way to drive almost to the nest on the east trail, and then you can come around to my room and stay while the Bird Woman works. It's nearly always cool there, and there's comfortable seats and water."

"Oh! Did you have drinking water there?" she cried. "I was never so thirsty or so hungry in my life, but I thought I wouldn't mention it."

"And I had not the wit to be seeing!" wailed Freckles. "I can be gez-

He turned to the trail "Please wait a minute." called the angel. "What's your name? I want to think about you while you are

Freckles smiled quizzically. "Freckles?" she guessed, with a peal of laughter. "And mine is"-

"I'm knowing yours," interrupted Freckles. "I don't believe you do. What is it?" asked the girl

"You won't be getting angry?" "Not until I've had the water at

It was Freckles' turn to laugh. He whipped off his big, floppy straw hat, stood uncovered before her and said in the sweetest of all the sweet tones of his voice, "There's nothing you could be but the Swamp Angel."

Once out of her sight Freckles ram every step of the way to the cabin. Mrs. Duncan gave him a small bucket of water, cool from the well. He carried it in the crook of his right arms and a basket filled with bread and butter, cold meat, apple pie and pickle in his left hand.

The girl laughed happily.

"Pickles are kind o' cooling," said Mrs. Duncan. The angel was on her knees reach-

ing for the bucket as he came up. "Be drinking slow," he cautioned

Freckles stood blinking in the des zling glory of her smile. "Mercy!" she exclaimed. "I think I had best be naming you the angel-

my guardian angel." "Yis," said Freckles. "I look the character every day, but today most

emphatic!" "Angels don't go by looks," laughed the girl. "Your father told us you had been scrapping. But he told us why. I'd gladly wear all your cuts and bruises if I could do anything that would make my father look as peacocky as yours did. He strutted about proper. I never saw any one lock prouder."

"Did he say he was proud of me?" marveled Freckles.

"He didn't need to," answered the few days for seven or eight weeks angel. "He was radiating pride from every pore."

The angel spread the lunch on the carriage seat. The daintiest parts she could select she carefully put back into the basket. The rest she ate. As he watched her with famished eyes Freckles told her of his birds, flowers and books.

Suddenly the angel cried, "There

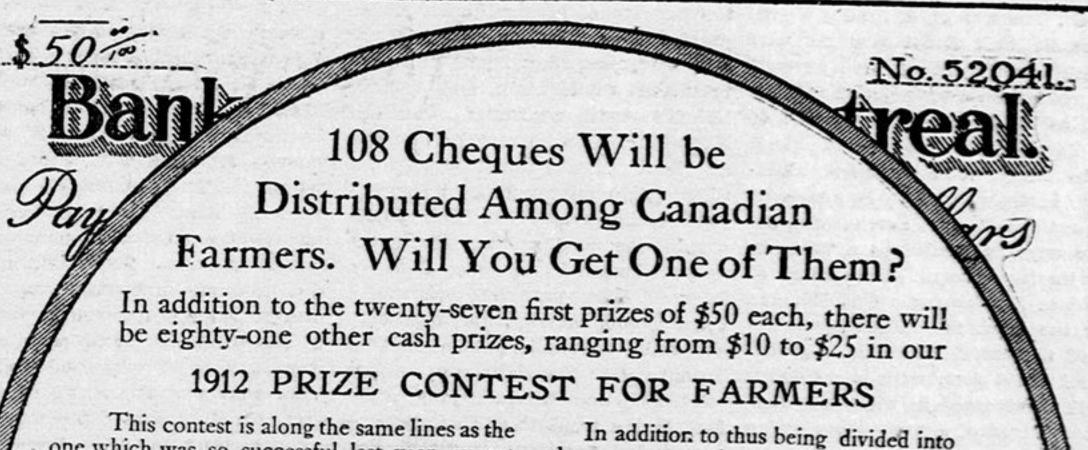
comes the Bird Woman!" She was staggering under a load of cameras and paraphernalia. Freckles took all he could carry and helped her

into the carriage. Soon they were out of the swamp. Then he showed them how to reach the chicken tree from the outside, indicated a cooler place for the horse and told them how the next time they came the angel could find his room

while she waited. "Were you forgetting Little Chicken's picture?" Freckles asked the Bird

(To be continued.)

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