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CHARTER SMITH,
Foundryman, Durham, Ont.

For the Revelsforth Millions.

AN ANGEL OF EVIL.

A Story of Intense Interest in which a Beautiful but Unscrupulous Woman's Schemes are Made to Fail by the Man She Loves.

purple silk gown and lace cap, was clearly visible to those without. Mrs. Harold Revelsforth had seen her—that was evident. A strange tremor passed over Margaret Revelsforth's upright frame, and the naturally bright color faded from her cheeks as, with trembling hands, she sought her chair and sank down upon it.

"I have lived too much alone," she murmured to herself, "and I must be growing weak-witted with age. For it seems to me I have admitted a bundle of ill-luck into my house."

Downstairs, Betty Mannington was experiencing a similar shock. Mrs. Harold's looks did not improve at close quarters. In the passage from the cab into the house her bonnet had become disarranged, and the long elflocks of mingled raven-black and iron-gray which fell over her brow down her wrinkled cheeks so greatly emphasized her remarkable ugliness that Betty had much ado to keep from screaming at the sight of her.

From the windows of the library in the front of the house Dudley and Victor beheld their strange-looking aunt's arrival with dismay.

Was it possible, they asked themselves, that even thirty years and a stroke of paralysis could transform the lovely black-eyed beauty whose picture they had so often admired as children, to that hideous and uncanny-looking little object with the hooked nose and the claw-like hands?

"But Francesca must be an angel indeed to be good to a mother like that," was Victor's conclusion; and Dudley appeared to agree with him.

In his secret heart however Dudley by no means shared his brother's sentiments on this subject. The abnormal wickedness which he fancied he detected in the cunning eyes and cruel mouth of Francesca's mother impressed him in a most powerful and disagreeable manner. He had too much fairness and good sense to let himself be swayed wholly by first impressions; but that such a face as that of his uncle Harold's widow could belong to any but an evil-natured woman he would have found it difficult to believe.

"There is something about all this which I don't understand," he told himself, "and I don't think any better of my beautiful cousin now that I have seen her mother."

Meantime little Betty was finding that the sensations of surprise and aversion which the first sight of Francesca's mother had inspired died away on better acquaintance.

Not one word escaped Mrs. Harold Revelsforth as she was carried up the shallow oak staircase, across the passage on the first floor and through the green baize door, and up the narrow second flight of steps towards the room which had been prepared for her. Here a bright fire was burning by Betty's directions, flowers stood about the room, and a comfortable cushioned invalid's chair was drawn up to the hearth. Into this Francesca's mother was lifted—silent, shrivelled, yellow, the only sign of life about her being the keen black eyes, which wandered restlessly about, taking in every detail of her surroundings.

At last she spoke, in a thin but not unmusical voice, with a marked foreign accent.

"I thank you, my good man; I thank you, my beloved daughter. Forgive me that I have troubled you. You are very good, very kind with a poor broken old woman. The young man can row go, can he not?"

Cross-grained and cynical as Wellington was, he still possessed some vanity, and the expression "young man" was not unpleasing to him. Still, he hastened to leave the soft impachment.

"If you mean me, ma'am, he said stolidly, "I am glad to be of use; but a man at forty-seven isn't a young man any longer, more's the pity!"

"Are you as old as that?" murmured Mrs. Harold. "It is true, then, that in England the men and women do not get old. Ah, my friend, what if you were fifty-five, as I am, and the good Heaven had sent a fit to strike you down? Then you would know what it is to feel old."

"She isn't a bad sort, barring that she's like the missing link," was Mr. Wellington's criticism later, when he discussed Mrs. Harold with his fellow-servants. "But she's got a blarneying tongue that don't take in a man of my intelligence."

"My mother won't be able to come down to dinner or to any of her meals," Francesca explained to Betty. "She never leaves her room except when I carry her."

"You must be very strong!"

"Oh, she isn't heavy, and I am used to it!"

Francesca was standing behind her mother's chair as she spoke, with her hands upon the cushions, and Betty saw Mrs. Harold suddenly lower her gray head and press her lips upon her daughter's hand. As she did so, her wrinkled witch-like face seemed transfigured. A soft light glowed in her coal-black eyes, and for a few moments the passion of tenderness which swept over her features rendered them almost attractive.

Little Betty turned away with a lump in her throat. For a moment the thought of the mother she had lost in her early childhood came vividly back to her mind. But Francesca appeared to make no response to her mother's outburst of affection, for when Miss Mannington's eyes again sought her, she was composedly removing her hat before the mirror at the other side of

the room. Seeing the door of the room which had been prepared for her, she opened it, and after a short pause, "how grateful I am for her kindness, I have been so poor—so poor—but for my brave and beautiful darling here I should not be alive—that to have this beautiful home seems too good to be true. And to see my nephews, sons of that brave handsome brother of whom my beloved husband was always talking—it is all too much happiness! You are like my husband," she went on, addressing Dudley—"very like him. Ah, was he not handsome and grand to look at with his blue eyes and his yellow curls and mustache—the grandest man that ever lived! Which is the younger of you two?"

"I am, madame,"

"Not 'madame,' but 'Aunt Anna! You are not so like the Revelsforts; but you have the artist face and the artist soul. I do not doubt, my husband had some of your father's drawings. Ah, he was a superb artist, and without doubt you inherit his talent! How old are you, my nephew?"

"Twenty-three," she repeated, and looked at him reflectively. "It is the morning of life."

"That is the first dinner-bell, ma'am," Francesca's voice broke in, with a faint note of impatience. "My aunt doesn't like to be kept waiting; and we have only ten minutes to dress in."

Her cousins were not unwilling to take the hint. Try as they would, they could not reconcile themselves to Mrs. Harold Revelsforth's sinister ugliness.

"The excellent aunt Anna," observed Victor, when the young men found themselves in their own rooms, "is without doubt the lady of the highest character, the most admirable piety; but, ciel, she what you call gives me the shakes!"

"How in the world she can ever have been good-looking!" "Beats me!" observed Dudley, commencing vigorously to brush his curly hair. "And there's something comical and servile in that fawning flattering manner. Didn't it strike you in that light?"

"But how, then, can she be so common when she comes of a noble Italian family?"

"Noble Italian families are sometimes confoundedly poor. It seems a mean thing to 'hard upon a cripple' but Mrs. Harold Revelsforth's appearance and manner are certainly very much against her."

Left alone with her mother, the beautiful Francesca did not waste many words before hurrying to her room which was adjacent, to change her dress.

"Don't overdo the politeness, mother," was all she said. "And, before I go, tell me what you think of him."

"Oh, la—he will do, he will do!" Mrs. Harold murmured softly, as she rubbed her chilly hands together.

"Already he has asked me to marry him."

"My beautiful queen, that is not surprising! And the other—the big one?"

"He will ask me too, sooner or later."

"They are all yours—the men—you say, they belong to you. But run away with my beauty, and put on one of your pretty gowns, and let them see what a princess you can look, my daughter!"

At the sound of the second dinner-bell Victor and Dudley left their rooms at the moment when Francesca was leaving hers, and both young men gazed after the nun-like admirer loitering in a dinner-pony of deep ruby velvet cut in a small square at the neck, and with large sleeves reaching a little below the elbow, she looked like some of the foregone portrait come to life the contrast between her white skin and the rich tint of her gown being absolutely startling. Even Wellington who waited at table, was impressed in spite of himself by her beauty.

"Dress down a lot," he subsequently confided to Susan and cook; "but that Francesca is a fine woman, and no mistake! The late Mrs. Wellington was a fine woman in her way, though a temper like a tiger-cat. But this Francesca she's something out of the common good-looking, in my private opinion women as handsome as her are responsible for the damage they do, and for the sake of public morals, they should be watched on every side."

"Beauty or no beauty," said Susan, with a toss of the head, "she's twenty-five and can't get a husband!"

"You're twenty-seven, Susan, and you haven't got one; though, to do you justice, in your case it ain't for want of trying!"

Upstairs, Wellington's betters were fully as much impressed as he by Francesca's splendid appearance. Both Dudley and Victor found it difficult to keep their eyes off her; and little Betty was in a state of admiration. Even Mrs. Re. herself seemed to comment favorably upon her niece's costume.

"You're much too fine for a quiet little dinner for your relatives!" she observed. "Still, that's a very handsome dress. What's that nasty thing you've got on your arm?"

"That nasty thing" was Francesca's gold ornament—a bracelet of enamelled gold coiled round her left wrist in the form of a snake.

"It is my only bit of jewelry, aunt Margaret. I always wear it for luck."

"Luck! Why, it's a disgusting reptile, with a great ugly head—a loathsome thing to wear!"

"My father gave it to me a short time before he died," Francesca said in a low voice, "and I hope to wear it all my life!"

Seated next to her, Victor looked twice upon the trinket where it curled down round the dazzling fairness of the cousin's arm. Without wishing to

shows, scanning them with her coal-black eyes. Between mother and daughter there existed no trace of resemblance, the features of the former being large and coarse, and her skin being of a ruddy and pallid. The touch of her hand to repelled them; in spite of the warm fire near which she was seated and the unusually high temperature for an English April day, her fingers chilled them by their clammy cold—for her hand was like the hand of a dead woman.

"So you are the two sons of my dear dead brother, whom I never saw!" she murmured. "Ah, if you could but have known me years ago, before this affliction fell upon me! I could then have been an aunt you might have been proud of. But it is the will of Heaven! I must not complain." And with that she crossed herself devoutly. "You quiet your dear aunt," she proceeded, after a short pause, "how grateful I am for her kindness, I have been so poor—so poor—but for my brave and beautiful darling here I should not be alive—that to have this beautiful home seems too good to be true. And to see my nephews, sons of that brave handsome brother of whom my beloved husband was always talking—it is all too much happiness! You are like my husband," she went on, addressing Dudley—"very like him. Ah, was he not handsome and grand to look at with his blue eyes and his yellow curls and mustache—the grandest man that ever lived! Which is the younger of you two?"

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shook his aunt's prejudice, a slight shudder of repulsion ran through him as he noted the realistic coloring of the enamel-work, the dull green and brown tints of which faithfully reproduced those of certain breeds of vipers. The head especially, with its dark crown and yellow spotted throat, appeared disgustingly lifelike.

"But it is horrible!" he exclaimed. "You are too beautiful, Francesca, to wear a so nasty ornament!"

"I cannot understand the popular prejudice against snakes," she said calmly. "They are often pretty and graceful, and very seldom venomous."

"We will take you to the snake house of the Zoo, Francesca, and show you the big python," said Dudley. "You will be wanting it for a waist-belt if you like such ornaments."

"A morbid fancy I call it," interposed Mrs. Revelsforth in declivous tones. "And I hate morbid fancies!"

"I am sure Francesca doesn't look a bit morbid!" exclaimed little Betty, ever anxious to keep the peace. "Morbidity people are generally so horribly pallid. Don't you remember, Mrs. Revelsforth, those Americans who stayed at the White Hart Hotel last summer and kept pet frogs? Dreadfully pale they all were!"

"But Betty, there is no affinity between frog-keeping and pallor," protested Dudley; and at his ready uncle's cousin glanced quickly in Betty's direction.

The girl laughed and colored slightly. "But morbidity and pallor usually go together, don't they?" she said. "And Mrs. Revelsforth considered frog-keeping morbid."

"Alions donc!" cried Victor. "Then all little schoolboys are what you call morbid, and assuredly they are not pale. I myself at school—I would have had two or three white mice in my coat, and shiny booties in my hat, and a lizard or a tortoise in my trouser-pocket all at the same time. I loved animals, do you see?"

"But Francesca doesn't love animals," remarked Mrs. Revelsforth, who seemed considerably incensed against her niece, on account of her curious taste in jewelry. "She objects to dogs, if I remember aright."

"I don't like savage ones, certainly," said Francesca gently; "but I try not to show that I am afraid of them."

"Talking of dogs," said Mrs. Revelsforth, "reminds me that I haven't seen Briton to-day. Surely he has come back by this time! Why do you all look so mysterious? Has the dog been stolen, or has anything happened to him of which I haven't been told?" Betty, tell me the truth about him at once!"

"Poor Briton is not well," faltered Betty. "But at this point Wellington, to whom Mrs. Revelsforth turned impatiently, blurted out the truth.

"Briton died last evening, ma'am I found him dead when you came back from your drive!"

"Briton dead!" exclaimed the old lady, rising in her chair, pale, excited, and angry. "Why was I not told of this? And how did it happen?"

"He was taken ill before mid-day yesterday," Betty explained. "We were afraid to tell you; he had the vet, and Mr. O'Meara was very good to him. But—I think he must have been fighting, and must have eaten something that disagreed with him. He died yesterday between five and six."

"And you let me eat my dinner without telling me! It was most unfeeling and deceitful! Let me see the poor thing at once!"

"He was buried in the stable-yard to-day, Mrs. Revelsforth. Indeed we only wanted to spare you."

"In ignorance of what goes on in my own house!" said Mrs. Revelsforth sternly. "She was still standing, with her cheeks trembled with agitation, she folded her table-napkin, laid it on the table, and, without another word to the rest of the company, she left her dinner untouched on her plate and stalked majestically to the room.

"Little Betty rose also, and, begging the others to excuse her, hurried after her employer.

"Excitement is not good for her," she whispered as she left the room. "I must try to calm her."

The two young men half rose in their seats and glanced at each other doubtfully. But Francesca resumed her dinner, and calmly requested Wellington to hand her the new potatoes.

"Of what use will it be if we leave our dinners to follow her?" she asked her cousin philosophically in French. "She will be as angry in half an hour, and she will be very hungry. It is a pity to leave this old chicken and this excellent claret and champagne after all, it is not our fault if the dog fought and got killed, and we shall not bring him to life by starving ourselves."

"The little Mademoiselle Betty will be so and so," observed Victor, as he and his brother resumed their seats. "She is so sympathetic and kind."

"She is appreciated too, I am glad to say," Francesca remarked. "I had my sweetheart at Kingston Station yesterday—a most handsome and attractive young man. Some more asparagus, if you please!"

"Her sweetheart! Has she then a sweetheart?"

"He lives just opposite, across the Green, I believe, and rents the babies here. She is such a nice and pretty girl that I am greatly interested in her little affair. But you must not tease her about it; I don't think she would like it."

"We shall be rather shy of going up into the drawing-room after that little contretemps," Dudley presently observed. "And yet I don't know what else we can do."

The incident seemed to have had the effect of separating the inmates of Revelsforth House into two camps—Mrs. Margaret and Betty in one, and the other Francesca and the two young men.

"Aunt Margaret ought to have that nasty and useless library burned into a bird-room," said Mrs. Revelsforth, as she helped herself to trifle.

"Who is going to suggest it to her?" asked Victor, with a comical grimace.

"I am," responded Francesca. "She was so calm, so grand and gracious in her self-possession, her sweet manners, and her evident enjoyment of her dinner, and so evidently without

Spiders.

Spiders are an unsociable, misanthropical race at the best of times and usually regard each other with the most uncompromising aversion. This imbibers all social intercourse, so that a spider wandering by accident into his brother's web is received in a manner that if "a little more than kin" is certainly "less than kind." Instead of hospitably entertaining his visitor mine host either drops by a fine thread and disappears from view or promptly prepares to fight him. Eviction is not his object, but capture, with ulterior designs upon the body, which with a wise forethought the master of the house already destined for the larder.

But putting aside these prudent considerations it is a grand albeit a savage sight to witness the encounter when the combatants are well matched for size and strength—the cautious advance, with a delicate testing of threads on both sides; the wily feint, followed by a precipitate retreat, and wild dangling of the hero suspended in midair, and then the headlong rush and death grapple, hand to hand, foot to foot, which is rendered very impressive when six legs are brought into active requisition at once on either side.

Mushrooms Easily Grown.

Any one may raise mushrooms in his cellar or even in his attic with very satisfactory results.

He should have a bed which may consist of a shallow box, and this should be filled with a dark, rich loam to the depth of, say, eight inches. It should be in a dark place, and a damp place also is beneficial, but if he uses an attic the room may be kept dark by heavy curtains and the earth damp by frequent watering. An average temperature of from 60 to 70 degrees should be maintained. Almost all seeds-men sell the spawn bricks, and when the bed is prepared the spawn should be broken into fine surface particles and just covered with the earth.

Notwithstanding the popular belief, mushrooms do not come up in a night, but they do in four or five nights, and when once up their growth is very rapid.—Exchange.

All the Same.

During an encampment of the national guard of Pennsylvania at Mount Gretna several years ago a party of officers went out for a stroll, and, happening to pass a farmhouse near the encampment grounds, one of them suggested stopping in for a glass of milk. On going inside the yard they were met by the farmer's daughter, who brought forth a can of buttermilk and some tumbler, saying:

"This is the only kind of milk we have."

After each of the party had taken a drink one of them remarked:

"By George, that's fine! Can't you let us have some more?"

The lass replied:

"Oh, yes; take all you want. We feed it to the pigs anyway."

System In Saving.

"The only good plan for saving is to make it an invariable rule to deposit something each week or each month," says a bank president. "Having thus put the money aside, it should be considered out of reach and on no account to be drawn upon except in case of sickness, loss of employment or death. It is surprising how money will pile up when such a system as this is followed. If every one who possesses any income at all would adopt the practice and stick to it no matter how small the deposits might be, poverty would be well nigh abolished."

Misinterpreted.

A delicate point of pronunciation is involved in this story. A country cousin once went to spend Sunday with an Edinburgh friend. After a long day spent in sightseeing they found themselves a long way from home.

"No, mon," said the townsman, "we've a long way to gang. Shall we tak' a tram?"

"Tak' a tram?" cried the other in surprise. "Ye dinna mean to tell me that in Edinburgh the public houses are open on the Sabbath?"

A Maddening Legacy.

A young man at St. Mende was driven mad by a legacy of £4,000. From the moment the money came into his possession he was oppressed by the fear of losing it and always carried it about with him. He finally made a bonfire of it in the form of notes and then attempted to blow out his brains.—London Chronicle.

One of Our Pet Phrases.

"Did any of the inhabitants escape with his life?" inquired the man who wants harrowing details.

"I didn't stop to ascertain," answered the man who is harrowingly exact. "It struck me that if anybody escaped without his life there wasn't much use in his escaping anyhow."

No Help From Her.

"Miss Frisbie—Ellen, love," said young Mr. Gallagher timidly, "I have lost my heart."

"I'm sorry I can't help you, Mr. Gallagher," replied the maiden not unkindly. "I haven't found it."

Mutual Surprise.

She—When I married you, I had no idea that you would stay away from home so much.

He—Well, neither had I.

If the best you can say about your neighbor is in reply to the worst he said about you, don't say it.—Baltimore News.

One-third of the United States proper is vacant land.

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