

days later, a scarecrow that's a shadow of Scalawag, shaky and shivery, crawls back into Scow Falls, an' goes to sleep by the roadside—

"It's the Devil, with a grin on his face, that finds him there—an' it's the Devil who picks him up and takes him home—an' it's the Devil's face that the Scalawag first sees when he comes to.

"The Devil keeps on smilin'. An' the Scalawag keeps on shiverin'.

"Scalawag," says the devil, gentle-like, 'where's them sheep I sent you for—where's them sheep.'

"I—I didn't get 'em,' stammers out the Scalawag. "I—didn't get 'em Angelman."

"Angelman holds out his hand, insinuat' like—

"Scalawag," he says, 'where's my fifty, then?'

"Well, the Scalawag is white enough, but he turns whiter—like the—well, white like the stomach of a frog—and he slumps down on the floor and crouches down at the feet of this here Devil of an Angelman, and blubbers out—

"Angelman," he cries, 'I started out to spend—just what you said I could for my wages on the thing—and I didn't know—I didn't mean to spend another



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cent on myself—but.' He turns his pockets inside out.

"What!" cries this here Angelman, 'you spent my fifty—not for sheep. You spent it on yourself—wine, woman an' song, eh?'

"Wine an' song,' say the Scalawag, 'lots of both. Angelman,' he cries, 'I'll pay it back—I'll pay it right away—'

"Angelman was just waitin' for him to say that. 'Pay it back,' he sneered, 'you haven't got a dollar to your name. You're a thief, Scalawag, a plain, low down ornery thief. You're guilty of grand larceny, do you understand? I can send you to State's prison for it, and by —, I will.'

"THAT was Angelman, standing over the shiverin', cowerin' Scalawag—an', I tell you, stranger, knowin' both men, an' feelin' as Scalawag felt, I can see 'em both. Can't you—this here smug Devil, that only got drunk behind his own closed doors, so the world couldn't never see, and this here daredevil, Scalawag, who was wearin' his heart on his sleeve—I can see 'em. And Scalawag wore his heart on his sleeve this trip, an' Angelman saw it, an' sized it up pretty correct, I tell you.

"An' the Scalawag just shivers down there on the floor, dead beat an' all in. He's cryin' to beat the band—but it ain't through fear—it's through shame. It ain't because of the Devil—but it's because of an angel—not Angelman—but an angel girl. And he actually clasps his hands together, so I understand, an' actually crawls before the Devil—

"Angelman," he pleads, 'don't say it's grand larceny. I never stole a cent in my life—'

"You stole my fifty," says Angelman, never turning a hair. And again he comes out with those ugly

words, 'grand larceny' and 'State's prison.'

"Angelman," pleads Scalawag, 'let me off, an' I'll work my fingers to the bone to pay you back. I'll keep straight so long as I live. It ain't myself I'm thinkin' of. It's her.'

"Ah," says this here Angelman, 'it's her, is it. It's Evangeline Mitcheltree—'

"Scalawag shivered some more. 'Don't tell her, for God's sake, Angelman,' he pleads, 'anything but that—'

"So that's the idee, is it?" sneers Angelman, 'here's you—drunk for three days—a thief—maybe a convict—grand larceny—State's prison—an' you've got the nerve to talk about Evangeline Mitcheltree in the same breath with yourself. What do you mean by it?'

"Well, stranger, it took the Scalawag all of a heap. And then Angelman struck him all of a heap. Before the Scalawag knew it, the Devil, Angelman, had scrawled out a paper and had read it to him, and Scalawag had signed it. The paper—oh, it was nothing but a written confession that he was guilty of grand larceny in the first degree. And when he'd signed it, Angelman waved it over his head, an' he says:

"Scalawag," he says, 'you've got to give up Evangeline Mitcheltree.'

"Anything but that," groans Scalawag, 'and don't you ever tell her, Angelman.'

"Angelman, he waves the confession over him again. "Scalawag," he says, 'she'll never know from me—but I ain't going to have a sweet little girl like this here Mitcheltree girl marry a thief like you. I'll keep mum, but you got to give her up.'

"WELL, it's due to Scalawag to say that it wasn't the confession that made him give her up—but it was what Angelman said about his not bein' fit for her. He made up his mind mighty quick that he wasn't fit for her—a thief—. My Lordy, stranger, you don't know what a thief the Devil turned out to be later, but—anyways.

"Don't you ever tell her, Angelman, pleads the Scalawag.

"She'll never know about it from me," says Angelman.

"And Scalawag goes out, humbled an' sorrowful—a broken man. He walks along, he don't know where, but finally he fetches up in Mitcheltree's kitchen—and he finds he's facing Evangeline. And he just stands there before her and tells her—

"I'm a thief," he says, 'and I've fallen—an'—, he tells her everything. Finally he catches her by the hand and starts to kiss her, thinks better, and starts out the door. 'Good-bye,' he says, 'I'm not fit for the likes of you. Good-bye.'

He goes. She calls after him, but he never looks back. And no sooner has he gone than this here Devil turns up in that same kitchen, and starts in:

"I go somethin' to tell you that I know will grieve you," he says, smooth and pious-like—breakin' his promise, 'this here Scalawag—I don't want to hurt your feelin's—but Scalawag's a thief, and it's my duty to tell you—and to save you—'

"She looks at him, quiet-like, but with a sob in her voice. 'You needn't bother,' she says, 'for he's already told me—an' he's already saved me from himself. Good day.'

"Well, you may be surprised that she married the Devil," went on my friend, lighting up another of my cigars.

"I certainly am," I answered, "thought you said so some time ago. But how could she—"

"Nobody knows unless he knows, the Devil. That Angelman had a way with him that she couldn't resist any more than could the Scalawag—it was like the dropping water that wears away a stone. He got her—that's all. And she knew when she married him—or so she says—that she didn't love him. And she knew he didn't love her. And she knew what he knew and what everybody else knew—that he married her to get them two fine farms, and for nothing else—and then the fun began for her. If ever there was a white-livered hypocrite on the face of this earth, the Devil was one. He was what you call down in New York, a regular street angel, and a house devil. He didn't even walk the narrow path. Drunk—he used to get drunk as a lord in the house—an'—the man at my side clenched his hands, "there was times when he beat her. An' as for the narrow

path—talk about wine, women an' song—go down to Donaldson an' ask 'em sometime about Angelman."

"I'll stop there on my way back to the city," I assured him, "and make inquiries."

"Well," he went on, speaking now in tones that seemed somehow to hurt him, "married to the Devil, as she was, Evangeline Mitcheltree commenced, literally, stranger, to live in hell—"

"And," I asked during a lull, while the man's hands seemed to be clenched the tighter, "what of Scalawag?"

"Don't ask that," he exclaimed, with something like a snarl at the recollection, "you can figure for yourself. Scalawag had to forget, didn't he? What was there left for him in life? Not much, but fear—and he did fear, too. For the weaker he got, the greater his terror became of that written confession that Angelman kept flashing in his eyes. And Scalawag became something else than Scalawag, you understand—he became a sort of under-Devil to the Devil-in-chief, as it was. . . ." He scowled.

"How do you mean?" I asked.

"Angelman had dirty work to be done—dirty business work," he faltered, "and he plied Scalawag with forty rod, and Scalawag did it. If Scalawag refused, out came the confession, every time. And finally—it was when Angelman was rushing a big yellow blonde down in Donaldson—it was then that he turned his biggest piece of deviltry—and he turned it out of his wife, at that—the white-livered scoundrel. It was a steal.

"Listen. One day he says to Scalawag, he says: 'Scalawag,' he says, 'get into this rig with Kline an' me—Kline was his lawyer—'get in,' he says, 'we got some business to 'ten to, an' we want to take you along.'

"Scalawag got in—he'd learnt to do what the Devil told him to. Scalawag was all dressed up, it seems—the Devil had loosened up the week before, and had bought the Scalawag a new suit of clothes. They all drove out to Angelman's, which happened to be the Mitcheltree homestead, and they all got out. Scalawag hung back. 'Here,' he says, pullin' the Devil by the coatsleeve, 'I don't want to go in there.'

"The Devil gave him a black look, as much as to say: 'Do as I tell you or I'll send you up,' an' the Scalawag goes along. Inside—well, she's there—pale an' thin, but as pretty as ever—an' tremblin' all over. She never looks at the Scalawag, but asks her husband, this here Devil, what it's all about.

"Vangie," he says, nice and pleasant, 'I've sold these here two farms for ten thousand dollars to the Scalawag,' he says, 'an' Mr. Kline's come to have you sign the deeds.'

"But," she objects, 'I didn't want to sell the farms.' "Oh, yes," he says, nice and pleasant, showin' his teeth, 'yes, you did—at least I did, for it's a good price, an'—'

"For the first time she looks at Scalawag, suspicious. 'Where did he get the money to buy the farms?' she asks.

"THE Devil was ready for her. 'Relative died and left it to him,' he says, lying, 'the Scalawag's one of our richest citizens now. You sign right here,' he says.

"Well, she signs. No matter how or why. She was afraid of the Devil an' all his works. They didn't have no children or she might have fought him for them. But she signs, in fear an' tremblin'. Then Kline turns to Angelman.

"Go out o' the room a minute," he says.

"Then he smiles at her, Kline does, an' says: 'I got to ask you, whether you sign this here without any fear, threats or compulsion of or from your said husband,' he says, 'silly formula,' he says, 'but we got to ask it. Come in, Angelman,' he cries, without waiting for her answer, an' he signed the document to make it legal an' it's all over. Only she turns to Angelman.

"Where's the money?" she demands, for the farms were hers.

"Angelman waves his hand. 'I've banked it down to town,' he says, 'an' it's all right,' he says, 'what's mine is yours,' he says, jocular-like, 'an' what's yours is mine. Come on, gents.'

"We goes back—to this here tavern, an' the Devil winks at Kline. 'Pretty slick, that Kline,' he says, tossing down a drink that would have pretty near heeled the Scalawag over—only the Devil never showed it, and mostly didn't seem to feel drinks like that.

"I congratulate you," says Kline, as he goes. Kline