

# THE MONITOR

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ARABELLUS SILVER'S TEMPTATION.

For the Favorites.

## THE SILVER'S CHRISTMAS EVE.

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### CHAPTER I.

VIOLET SILVER.

It had its commencement like a comment of Fairy Land amongst the roses and in the moonlight.

A great emerald bank overhung a vast lake, fringed at its foot with a golden beach, and crowned with great pines, mingling their spicy incense with the breath of the roses swinging their crimson blossoms in the garden, midway up the steep, where, on a natural terrace, glistened the white columns of a pretty house.

Wide lawns sloped to the beach, bordered with selder-rose-trees, and acacias, flinging pearly globes and drooping saffery blooms in the air, heavy with dewy perfume, and two or three beeches echoed back the sleepy murmur of the lake, as their leaves rustled softly to the passing wind.

On the wide lawn a maze of winding paths led in and out through glowing alleys of every kind of rose that ever blushed beneath the sun, or yielded pearly favors to the riotous summer breeze, and hence it was that Arnold Silver's pretty villa by the lake was called "The Roses."

A hedge of dwarfish myrtle enclosed this radiant spot, and for artistic contrast with the masses of bloom within, a melancholy yew

loomed darkly by the wro gate, taking a paly silver from the moonlight, which poured a second tinge of radiance from the summer sky, purpling to amethyst where it kissed the lake; but above, a deep and slender blue, bridged with golden stars, and the silvery pathway of the milky-way.

Far out on the lake a schooner glided phantom-like across the diamond track of the moonlight, which seemed leading to the mysterious amethyst gates of the dim horizon; nearer land, the lights of the villa, poised midway up the hill, sent lanes of red light deep into the placid bosom of the inland sea, hardly palpating as the odorous wind stole across it.

A fountain opposite the drawing-room windows, sprang a shaft of diamond splendor against the moonlight, and by its marble margin stood a tall, slender girl, in a white dress, her arm over the neck of a white dog, at the feet of which crouched a fawn with great dark eyes and a collar tinkling with silver bells round its graceful neck.

Miss Violet Silver, Madames of Mesdemoiselle, only child and heiress of Arnold Silver, the great merchant, who, as the fairy tales say, "might have eaten gold every day," or, like the famous king, have occupied himself principally in "counting out his money," and found plenty of work at the same pleasant task.

Violet looked in the moonlight what the "garish day" would still behold her, a superb young creature, triumphant in the matter of a matchless face and form over a host of royal belles.

She was tall and lithe as a young gazelle in a tropical jungle, but no dove that partied the blue of Heaven with snowy wing had a plume whiter than her face was fair, though, mark