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carry tooth-brushes in your hat?" she inquired, flashing a laughing glance up at me as with a few dexterous touches she transformed the Cherub's bundle into a really respectable-looking affair. "As a matter of fact," I said, as we

followed the other two toward the house, "I have always found a toothbrush a source of worry and anxiety. I never travel anywhere but I begin to try and recollect if I packed it, and if so where, and, after turning my things over, generally end by finding it in my vest pocket or tobacco pouch. I don't remember that I ever carried it in my hat before."

On the lawn beneath the cedars we came upon Mrs. Dymott, reading, her pince-nez, with its broad, black ribbon, balanced upon the extreme tip of her nose in that way, which, in my schoolboy days, had always caused me to wonder how it managed to stick on. She rose to meet us with many expressions of pleased surprise, kissing us both resoundingly in her old, mother-

"How you've grown!" she remarked, patting me affectionately on the shoulder, "though, to be sure, I haven't seen

you since you left Harvard."
"And he's degenerated into an awful cynic since then," put in the Cherub.
"And carries tooth-brushes in his hat!" added Phyllidia.

"Still your tooth-brush," laughed Mrs. Dymott. "Do you remember, when you were quite little, losing it in the stables?"

"And fighting the boy because you found him cleaning the silver with it?" put in the Cherub again.

"I had settled convictions on the rights of property, even in those days," I said as we entered the house.

So that is the girl I have come to win for the cherub, I said to myself as a little later I followed him upstairs, and somehow the idea seemed singularly repulsive, and I felt unreasonably angry with him.

"Well," he inquired, as we dressed "what do you think of for dinner, Phyllidia?"

"Well," I began guardedly, "She is "Magnificent," he broke in, "and her eyes-what do you think of her eyes

now?" "Black as a moonless night," I repeated, fixing my collar, "that flash at you, man, from under low brows

crowned with misty hair." The Cherub glanced at me sheep ishly and changed the subject. "Cousin's rather nice,"

tured. "Charming," I answered, arranging my tie. "You had better be prepared," I continued, after a pause. "I shall I continued, after a pause.

commence operations for you at dinner to-night," and somehow I found myself sighing heavily. And yet I did not after all, for, sitting with her voice in my ears and

an occasional glance into her blackfringed eyes, I forgot the Cherub's very existence.

As the days passed my promise became a grisly phantom, haunting me in all places, my sleep became broken and when I met the Cherub's eye by accident I felt a traitor, and although I argued that he was unworthy of her, that such a mind as hers would be wasted on him, my conscience refused to be quieted. True he had ceased to worry me lately concerning the progress I had made, but his very avoidance of the subject served but to add coals of fire. I determined, therefore, to have it over once and for all at the next opportunity.

That evening, sitting in a quiet corner of the drawing-room, chance favor-

"I've been wondering why you call Mr. Dymott the 'Cherub'?" she inquired, glancing to where he and Kate were turning over some music at the piano.
"Oh, he got that at college," I be-

"You see he was such a contrast to himself, so to speak, his golden curls and blue eyes were so-so very cherubic, you know, and his general character was so-er-so-

"And what did they call you?" "They called me-'Gip'," I said, grateful for the interruption.



The Challenge.

"Gip," she repeated, and her eyes belied her solemn mouth. "I have a dog named Gip, the dearest old fellow. I really believe that, in his own way, he loves me better than anybody else in the whole world."

I shook my head. "I doubt it," I began unwarily, "though to be sure," I continued more cautiously, "there is a strange affinity between men and some animals, especially dogs; for instance, now I—" In another moment, despite my stern self-repression, I really believe I should have said more than I ought, for as she sat there beside me looking at me out of those deep eyes of hers, so close that her skirts brushed my knee, I had an almost overmasting



desire to relegate the Cherub to the deepest limbo, and my fingers itched to clasp the hand lying so near my own, but at that instant Kate began playing and I pulled myself up in time.
"Well," she said, under cover of the

music, with a look that was almost ex pectant in her eyes.
"For instance," I repeated, "if I

were a dog, I believe I could get toto-love the Cherub-in time. The corner of her red mouth quiver-

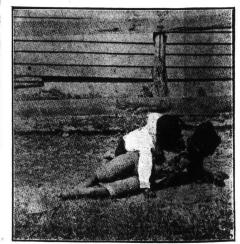
ed suspiciously, and I felt that she was laughing at me.

"You see," I continued, hurriedly, "he's such a—a splendid fellow,—er, not bad looking I mean, any woman might-er-"

"Love him," she said softly, without looking up.

"Er—yes—that is, I suppose so, though some people object to fair men I believe, think them-er-unstable and all that, but, of course, the Cherub-" "Is perfection," she said, opening and shutting her fan.

"Certainly."



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