

# THE WILD GEESE

BY Stanley J. Weyman.



(Copyright, 1909, by Stanley J. Weyman)

### Synopsis of Previous Chapters

Colonel John Sullivan, an Irish soldier, who has served abroad for many years, returns to his native Kerry on the sloop Cormorant, a French smuggling vessel, laden with Bordeaux wines. The cargo of the sloop is seized by the natives of Skull, against the futile protests of Captain Augustin, who realizes that he has no law on his side.

Colonel Sullivan is coldly received by Flavia and her brother, The McMurrugh, because of his alien faith and his undesirable position as their legal guardian. When Captain Augustin returns with Luke Aggill, the nearest justice, and demands the return of the confiscated cargo, Flavia and her guardian are in favor of returning the cargo, on the Captain's payment of the dues. The McMurrugh objects to this, but finally agrees to it on Colonel Sullivan's offer to get back Flavia's favorite mare, which was seized by British soldiers. The Colonel and his servant, Bale, set out and find the mare at the barracks of Tralee. The Colonel is invited to the messroom by the English officers, and one of them, named Payton, who seized the mare, throws wine in his face. The Colonel refuses to fight, because his right arm is permanently disabled. He wins a left-handed fencing bout with the maitre d'armes, at the same time winning the mare on a wager. At dinner upon his return to Morristown, he is amazed when Flavia drinks a toast "to the King across the water" and fears that a rising is contemplated. His fears are realized next morning when his kinsman, Ulick, warns him to leave the place and people to their fate. The Colonel refuses and next morning after breakfast is invited to a council of war. He refuses to join the proposed uprising, knowing its futility. Fearing that the Colonel may turn informer, The McMurrugh and his friends imprison him and his servant Bale. The next morning the men are led to their death by the agent of The McMurrugh, O'Sullivan Og. At the last moment this sentence is revoked and the Colonel and Bale are rowed through the mist to imprisonment in a Spanish war ship in the harbor. The rowboat capsizes and the two prisoners, luckily escaping, take refuge on the French sloop. Captain Augustin and his sailors, under the Colonel's direction, steal to the harbor at Morristown, and the leaders of the uprising on the sloop. The Bishop and Admiral Cammock are carried to sea for a period and The McMurrugh, on swearing that he will attempt nothing against Colonel John, is released. The Colonel returns to Morristown with the Colonel, Flavia, incensed at his return and the failure of the uprising, attacks the Colonel, who narrowly escapes death at her hands.

### CHAPTER XVI.

#### The Marplot

IF, after that, Colonel Sullivan's life had depended on his courage or the vigilance of his servant, it is certain that Flavia's prophecy would have been quickly fulfilled. The part which he had played in the events at the harbor was known to few; but the hundred tongues of rumor were abroad, carrying as many versions, and in all he was the marplot. His traffic with the Old Fox had spirited away the holy father and sweet old man, probably only bromatiack, the doughty champion whose sole desire it was to lead the hosts of Ireland to victory.

The logical consequence was certain. That the man who had these things on his black nefarious conscience should continue to haunt the scene of his crimes and lord it over those whom his misdeeds had sullied was to the common mind unthinkable. To every potato settler who out of the corner of his eye watched his passage, the very beggar by the road side was plain and known and the man already as the dead. If the cotters by the lakeside were not men enough, was there not Roaring Andy's hand in the hills, who would cut any man's throat for a silver denier and a heretic for the "trate it would be, and sorra a bit of pay at all, the good men!"

Beyond doubt the Colonel's nerve, which enabled him to take his place in the great, had destroyed the young man's secret; but the Irish are ever open to superstitious beliefs, and the man who poured death, as it were, from a horn went his way shrouded in a gloomy fame which might provoke the bold, but kept the timid at bay.

Before night it was known that the Colonel might be shot from behind with a silver bullet, or stabbed, if a man were bold enough, with a cross-handled knife, blessed and sprinkled. But woe to him whose aim proved faulty or his hand uncertain!

But this reputation alone, seeing that reckless spirits were not wanting, would have availed little if the protection of The McMurrugh had not been cast over him. Why it was cast over him men scarcely dared to guess. It was a dark thing into which it were ill to peer too closely. But the fact was certain that the anxiety of the young man that the Colonel might meet with no hurt was plain and notorious, a thing observed stealthily and with wonder.

He went his steps and covered his retreat; nor perhaps had the contempt in which he held James McMurrugh ever reached a higher pitch than while he stood from hour to hour indebted to that young man for his life.

What Uncle Ulick, if he held the key to the matter, thought of it, did not appear; nor was Colonel John overcurious to know. But what Flavia thought of the position was a point which aroused his most lively curiosity. He gave her credit for feelings so deep and for a nature so downright, that time-serving or paltering were the last faults he looked to find in her. He could hardly believe that she would consent to sit at meat with him after what had happened; and possibly for men are strange, and the motives of the best are mixed—a desire to see how she would bear herself in the circumstances had had something to do with the course he was taking.

That she consented to the plan was soon made clear. She even took part in it. James could not be always at his elbow. The young man must sometimes retire. When this happened the girl took her brother's place, stooped to dog the Colonel's footsteps, and for a day or two cast the mantle of her presence over the man she hated.

But stoop as she might, she never for a moment stooped to mask her hate. In her risings-up and at table with him, every movement of her body, the carriage of her head, the glance of her eye, showed that she despised him; that she who now suffered him was the same woman who had struck at his life, and failing, repented only the failure.

For her brother's sake she was willing to do this, though she abhorred it and though every time that she broke bread with the intruder, met his eyes or breathed the air that he breathed, she told herself that it was intolerable, that it must end.

Once or twice, feeling the humiliation more than she could bear, she declared to her brother that the man must go. "Let him go!" she cried, in uncontrolled excitement. "Let him go!"

"But he will not be going, Flavy." "He must go!" she replied. "And Morristown his!" James would answer. "Ye are forgetting! Over and above that, he's not one to do my bidding, nor yours!"

That was true. He would not go; he persisted in remaining and being master. But it was not there the difficulty lay. If he had not made a will before he came—a will that gave the property of the family forever beyond James' reach—the thing had been simple and Colonel John's shrift had been short. But now, to rid the earth of his wayward son, he had placed the hands of a stranger, an alien, for whom the ties of family and honor would have no stringency. True, the law was weak in Kerry. A writ was one thing and possession another.

A bold man might keep the forces of law at bay for a time; but James McMurrugh, notwithstanding the folly into which he had been led, was no desperado. He had no desire to live with a rope round his neck, to flee to the bog on the least alarm, and, in the issue, to give his name to an Irish Glencoe.

A position it had been hard to conceive more humiliating to a proud and untamed spirit such as Flavia's. The McMurrugh found little difficulty in subduing his temper to his interests, though now and again his churlishness broke out. For Uncle Ulick, his habit was to be easy and to bid others to be easy; the dawn and dark of a day recalled him to most things. The O'Boines, sullen and distrustful, still glad to escape present peril. Looking for a better time to come, they helped to shield the common enemy, supposed it policy and felt no shame. Flavia alone, in the presence of the man who had announced that he meant to be master, writhed in helpless revolt, swore that he should never be her master, swore that, whoever bowed their head, she never would.

And Colonel Sullivan, seated apparently at his ease, on the steep lap of danger, found his thoughts dwelling on the one untamable person, on the one enemy who would not stoop and whose submission seemed vain. The others took up the positions he assigned to them, gave him lip service, pretended that he were as they had been and he as he had been. She did not; she would not.

Presently he discovered with surprise that her attitude rendered him unhappy. Secure in his sense of right, certain that he was acting for the best, he should have been different. But he was not different.

Meantime, she believed that there was no length to which she would not go against him; she fancied that there was no weapon which she would not stoop to pick up if it would hurt him. And presently she was tried. A week had passed since the great fiasco. Again it was the eve of Sunday, and in the usual course of things a priest would appear to celebrate mass on the following day. This risk James was now unwilling to run. His fears painted that as dangerous which had been done safely Sunday by Sunday for years; and in a hang-dog, hesitating way, he let Flavia know his doubts.

"Devil take me if I think he'll suffer it!" he said, kicking up the turf with his toe. They were standing together by the waterside, Flavia rebelling against the consciousness that it was only outside their own walls that they could talk freely. "May be," he continued, "it will be best to let Father O'Hara know—to let be for a week or two."

The girl turned upon him, in passionate repression. "Why?" she cried. "Why?"

"Why, is it you're asking?" James answered sullenly. "Well, isn't it master for the time, had luck to him! And if he thinks we're beginning to draw the boys together he'll maybe put his foot down! And I'd rather be stopping it myself, just for a week or two, Flavy, than be hidden by him."

"But this," she continued with a shudder, "this is different." "What will you be after?" he cried impatiently. "You are not turning sheep-hearted at this time of day?" "Am not sheep-hearted." "What for, then, my girl?" "I can't do this," she said. She was still very pale. Something had touched her that had never approached her so nearly before.

"It's not that," she answered slowly. "It's the way. I can't!" It sickens me!" "And he's to do what he likes with us?" James cried. "No! No!"

"And we're not to touch him without our gloves?" "So I'd not answer, and twice her brother repeated the taunt. At last, "It's too vile!" she cried passionately. "It's too horrible! It's to sink to what he is, and worse! Her voice trembled with the intensity of her feelings. "Worse!" she repeated.

To relieve his feelings, perhaps to hide his shame, he cursed his enemy anew. And "I wish I had never told you," he added bitterly. "It's too late now," she replied. "Aggill could have managed it and no one the wiser."

"I believe you!" she replied quickly. "But not you! Don't do it, James," she repeated, laying her hand on his arm and speaking with sudden heat. "Don't you do it! Don't!"

"And we're to let the worst happen," he retorted, "and O'Hara perhaps be seized?" "Go for him!"

"That's rubbish! And this man be seized, and that man, as he pleases! We're to let him rule over us, and we're to be good boys whatever happens under the King George, and turn Protestants, ever man of us!"

"God forbid," she repeated strenuously. "As well slay," he retorted, "if we are to live slaves all our days! Cammock was right when he said he would let no woman knit a halter for his throat!"

She did not ask him who had been the life and soul of the movement, whose enthusiasm had set it going, and whose steadfastness maintained it. She did not tell him that the issue was a hundred times more grievous to her than to him. Her eyes were beginning to open with his fallings; but the habit of giving way to him was still strong; and when, with another volley of harsh, contemptuous words, he flung away from her, though her last interjection was a prayer to him to refrain, she blamed herself rather than him.

Now that she was alone, too, the priest's safety weighed on her mind. If Colonel John betrayed him, she would never forgive herself. Certainly it was unlikely he would, for in that part of the world she knew that the authorities winked at their presence, and it was only within sight of the walls of Tralee or of Galway that the law which proscribed them was enforced. But her experience of Colonel Sullivan's activities, his boldness, his audacity—made all things seem possible. He had been firm as fate in the removal of the Bishop and Cammock; he had been turned not for his purpose by her rage, her indignation, her indignation; she sickened at the remembrance of that moment. He was capable of everything, and if he thought fit—but at that point her eyes alighted on a man who was approaching along the bank. It was Father O'Hara himself. The priest was advancing as calmly and openly as if no law made his presence a felony, or as if no Protestant breathed the soft Irish air for a danger about him.

Her brother's words had shaken Flavia's nerves. She was courageous, but she was a woman. She flew to meet the priest, and with every step his peril loomed larger before her fluttered spirits. The wretch said that he would be master, and a master who was a Protestant, a fanatic!

She did not follow the thought to its conclusion. She waved a warning even before she reached him. When she did, "Father!" she cried eagerly, "you must get away, and come back after dark!"

The good man's jaw fell. He had been looking forward to good cheer and a good bed, to a rare oasis of comfort in his squalid life. He cast a wary look round him. "What has happened, my daughter?" he asked.

"Colonel Sullivan!" Flavia gasped. "He is here and he will certainly give you up!"

"Yes, you were at the Carraghlin! You have heard what happened! He will surely give you up!" the priest asked, with a deathly face.

"No, but he is here! He is in the house and may come out at any moment," Flavia explained. "Don't you understand?"

"Did he tell you—?" "What?" "That he would inform?"

"No!" Flavia replied, thinking the man very dull. "But you wouldn't trust him?"

The priest looked round to assure himself that the landscape held no overt signs of danger. Then he brought back his eyes to the girl's face, and he stroked his thin, brown cheeks reflectively. He recalled the scene in the bog, Colonel John's courage and his thought for his servant. And at last, "I am not thinking," he said coolly, "that he will betray me. I am sure—I think I am sure," he continued, correcting himself, "that he will not. He is a heretic, but he is a good man."

Flavia's cheeks flamed. She started back. "A good man!" she cried in a voice audible half a hundred yards away.

Father O'Hara looked a little ashamed of himself, but he stood by his guns. "A heretic, of course," he said. "But, I'm thinking, a good man. At any rate, I'm not believing that he will inform against me."

As quickly as it had come, the color fled from Flavia's face and left it cold and hard. She looked at the priest as he had never looked at a priest of her Church before. "You must take your own course, then," she said. And with a gesture he did not understand she turned from him and, leaving him puzzled and disconcerted, she went away into the house.

"A good man. Heaven and earth and the sea, besides! A good man! Father O'Hara was a fool!"

(To be continued)

"But this," she continued with a shudder, "this is different." "What will you be after?" he cried impatiently. "You are not turning sheep-hearted at this time of day?" "Am not sheep-hearted." "What for, then, my girl?" "I can't do this," she said. She was still very pale. Something had touched her that had never approached her so nearly before.

"It's not that," she answered slowly. "It's the way. I can't!" It sickens me!" "And he's to do what he likes with us?" James cried. "No! No!"

"And we're not to touch him without our gloves?" "So I'd not answer, and twice her brother repeated the taunt. At last, "It's too vile!" she cried passionately. "It's too horrible! It's to sink to what he is, and worse! Her voice trembled with the intensity of her feelings. "Worse!" she repeated.

To relieve his feelings, perhaps to hide his shame, he cursed his enemy anew. And "I wish I had never told you," he added bitterly. "It's too late now," she replied. "Aggill could have managed it and no one the wiser."

"I believe you!" she replied quickly. "But not you! Don't do it, James," she repeated, laying her hand on his arm and speaking with sudden heat. "Don't you do it! Don't!"

"And we're to let the worst happen," he retorted, "and O'Hara perhaps be seized?" "Go for him!"

"That's rubbish! And this man be seized, and that man, as he pleases! We're to let him rule over us, and we're to be good boys whatever happens under the King George, and turn Protestants, ever man of us!"

"God forbid," she repeated strenuously. "As well slay," he retorted, "if we are to live slaves all our days! Cammock was right when he said he would let no woman knit a halter for his throat!"

She did not ask him who had been the life and soul of the movement, whose enthusiasm had set it going, and whose steadfastness maintained it. She did not tell him that the issue was a hundred times more grievous to her than to him. Her eyes were beginning to open with his fallings; but the habit of giving way to him was still strong; and when, with another volley of harsh, contemptuous words, he flung away from her, though her last interjection was a prayer to him to refrain, she blamed herself rather than him.

Now that she was alone, too, the priest's safety weighed on her mind. If Colonel John betrayed him, she would never forgive herself. Certainly it was unlikely he would, for in that part of the world she knew that the authorities winked at their presence, and it was only within sight of the walls of Tralee or of Galway that the law which proscribed them was enforced. But her experience of Colonel Sullivan's activities, his boldness, his audacity—made all things seem possible. He had been firm as fate in the removal of the Bishop and Cammock; he had been turned not for his purpose by her rage, her indignation, her indignation; she sickened at the remembrance of that moment. He was capable of everything, and if he thought fit—but at that point her eyes alighted on a man who was approaching along the bank. It was Father O'Hara himself. The priest was advancing as calmly and openly as if no law made his presence a felony, or as if no Protestant breathed the soft Irish air for a danger about him.

Her brother's words had shaken Flavia's nerves. She was courageous, but she was a woman. She flew to meet the priest, and with every step his peril loomed larger before her fluttered spirits. The wretch said that he would be master, and a master who was a Protestant, a fanatic!

She did not follow the thought to its conclusion. She waved a warning even before she reached him. When she did, "Father!" she cried eagerly, "you must get away, and come back after dark!"

The good man's jaw fell. He had been looking forward to good cheer and a good bed, to a rare oasis of comfort in his squalid life. He cast a wary look round him. "What has happened, my daughter?" he asked.

"Colonel Sullivan!" Flavia gasped. "He is here and he will certainly give you up!"

"Yes, you were at the Carraghlin! You have heard what happened! He will surely give you up!" the priest asked, with a deathly face.

"No, but he is here! He is in the house and may come out at any moment," Flavia explained. "Don't you understand?"

"Did he tell you—?" "What?" "That he would inform?"

"No!" Flavia replied, thinking the man very dull. "But you wouldn't trust him?"

The priest looked round to assure himself that the landscape held no overt signs of danger. Then he brought back his eyes to the girl's face, and he stroked his thin, brown cheeks reflectively. He recalled the scene in the bog, Colonel John's courage and his thought for his servant. And at last, "I am not thinking," he said coolly, "that he will betray me. I am sure—I think I am sure," he continued, correcting himself, "that he will not. He is a heretic, but he is a good man."

Flavia's cheeks flamed. She started back. "A good man!" she cried in a voice audible half a hundred yards away.

Father O'Hara looked a little ashamed of himself, but he stood by his guns. "A heretic, of course," he said. "But, I'm thinking, a good man. At any rate, I'm not believing that he will inform against me."

As quickly as it had come, the color fled from Flavia's face and left it cold and hard. She looked at the priest as he had never looked at a priest of her Church before. "You must take your own course, then," she said. And with a gesture he did not understand she turned from him and, leaving him puzzled and disconcerted, she went away into the house.

"A good man. Heaven and earth and the sea, besides! A good man! Father O'Hara was a fool!"

(To be continued)

### Hassan, the Assassin

(By Charles Collins)

CERTAIN words there are, commonplace enough in our modern usage, that bring from remote centuries the echoes of strange romance and grim tragedy. They survive only as symbols of an almost forgotten time, but they still have the power to conjure up the spirit of their savage past.

Do you remember the tribe of Assassins, a sect encountered by the Crusaders, who consecrated themselves, under the intoxication of hashish, to rites of secret murder? Their name still lives in disguise, and after one thousand years I have seen its ghastly soul come back to earth. Listen, then:

Old Sheik Barakat greeted me with more than his usual cordiality, as I walked into the dingy little Syrian shop that day on one of my periodic quests for Oriental atmosphere. He released the stem of his huge and battered meerschaum pipe from the grip of his toothless gums; threw his disengaged hand up to his grizzled forehead in a military salute—for he was a quondam soldier of the Sultan and a survivor of Plevna, as well as of many American exhibitions—and then remarked with a benevolent grin: "How you do, sar? Three times welcome."

The Sheik was always on guard, as I found him that morning in the doorway of the shop owned by his nephew, Joe Tenny, which was commissariat and canteen for all the families of the Syrian colony. There these wanderers from the East purchased things that recalled their old home life under the shadows of Mount Lebanon—rich barley, Persian tobacco for their hookahs, new leather pipe-tubes, that potent and seductive liquor known as arrack, and many other articles, imported directly from the fatherland by the enterprising young merchant. A kindly folk, they lived happily in their tenements, decent and clean in spite of the squalor and vice of the negroes who were their neighbors, and so they were blessed with chaste daughters and commercial success. And Tenny prospered accordingly.

Stepping over the mangy mastiff that was snoring languorously at the Sheik's feet, I shook the withered claw he held out to me in friendship, set down on a sack of barley beside him, and appropriated his pipe to fill it with some pure Latakia—a trick by which I had long ago won his allegiance.

"Well, what has happened since my last visit, Sheik Al-Jehad?" I asked. "That this, meaning Old Man of the Mountains, I had jocosely conferred upon him, to his vast appreciation. He looked at me with a leer and a chuckle, and then vouchsafed the one word: "Wedding."

"Have you added another Creasian beauty to your harem?" I questioned with a pretense at shocked surprise, for the Sheik was an old bachelor whom it pleased to be chaffed about his amorous conquests.

"Not me," answered the veteran, in all seriousness. "Him."

He pointed to the back room, where Joe Tenny was disposing Syrian drinks to a Norwegian tempter and a squatty negro.

"Tell me all about it," I demanded inquisitively, for I had thought that the shopkeeper was too attentive to his business for sweetheating.

"Girl come all the way from Syria to marry Joe. He know her when he and always said would marry her when he got rich. When Joe came to America he was very home-sick to see her. What you think he did?"

"Wrote love-letters?" I ventured.

"No. Joe think letters no good. Can't hear her talk, can't hear her sing, in letters. So he buy phonograph—buy two phonographs, and send her one."

"Well, what good did that do him?" "Joe talk to his machine, and sing American songs—'Lovey Mine' and all the others. She do the same, but sing Syrian songs. Then they send to each other the magic wax things that hold the words. So Joe hear her talk and sing; she him, too. All the Syrians in city come sometimes to hear Joe's machine sing songs of home. Much business, therefore, Great scheme!"

This tale had a flavor so decidedly Arabian that I turned upon the Sheik a gaze of skeptic reproach. But he swore by his soldier's honor that it was true, and referred me to Joe for proof. Just then that ingenious young lover noticed me, and shouted loudly: "Come and have a drink."

The tempter had gone, and the negro was seated at one of the tables in a drunken semi-stupor, so I left the Sheik in a nebula of smoke, still pulling at the meerschaum of unlimited capacity, and went back into the bar-room, which was a gloomy cave, with windows facing on the alley. The mastiff that had been dozing at the Sheik's feet got up and followed me suspiciously.

Joe, who was handsome and well Americanized, accepted my congratulations radiantly, and reached for the bottle of arrack. I proposed the bride's health, and he returned the compliment with a glass to mine.

As we drank, a sweet, soft voice on the floor above began to croon an exotic ballad. Joe smiled and said: "That is Leila, singing to her phonograph."

"So the Sheik's story about your phonograph system of love-making is true?" I asked.

"Surest thing you know," he answered, with a happy laugh.

We were interrupted by the crash of a falling chair, and I turned around to see the negro, who had apparently been asleep, standing erect and listening to the song. His face was that of a jungle savage; his huge drooping shoulders and long arms made him seem more like a gorilla than a man.

"He's drunk," Joe remarked calmly. "I'll have to put him out."

The negro's eyes were rolling with a bloodshot glare; his thick lips were drawn back in a sensual grin. He began to walk, more like a somnambulist than a drunken man, toward the battered doorway which led to the alley. The Sheik, who was masking in the doorway and smoking his meerschaum as usual, I asked him if he had ever heard an ancient tale of his own country—a tale about an Old Man of the Mountains, and his people, the Hashchischim, drug-dreamers who murdered at his will.

Yes, the Sheik admitted blandly; he had heard of such a folk.

in the area, and disappeared in the alley. "Who is he?" I asked as Joe, the truculent gleam not yet out of his eyes, turned toward me.

That is Hassan, a bad man. He is not American nigger, but Egyptian. He was in the World's Fair, like the Sheik. I am afraid of him, especially when he is drunk, which is most of the time. He carries a knife, and talks big of having killed men.

Joe lowered his voice and continued: "I am not afraid of him for myself, but for her"—with a gesture toward the stairway. "You saw him just now? Well, he has followed her on the streets. That is the last time I let him come in here."

Just then the Sheik toddled in to join us, and discussion of the cloud that was casting a shadow over Joe's honeymoon ceased. But the old warrior must have observed the episode of a moment before, for he mumbled:

"Some day that Hassan die very quick."

Joe offered me more arrack to turn the conversation, but I declined. The Sheik, however, poured out a generous dose of the milky stuff, remarking: "Good, no give headache like whiskey."

I considered that statement justified. The mastiff looked up into the Sheik's face, and whined as he drank. With a senile giggle, the old man said: "Dog likes arrack better than Hassan."

He spilled some on the floor, and the animal, to my amazement, lapped it up eagerly.

Joe rattled off something that was evidently a protest against this waste of good drink, but the Sheik only chuckled.

"Dog now do anything for me to get more," he boasted. "Won't mind Joe at all; only me."

"Try it, Joe," I suggested.

The shopkeeper called the dog's name which was nothing more bizarre than "Sport," spoke Syrian and American endearments, ordered and cursed; but the mastiff did not raise its heavy muzzle from the floor, or turn its red eyes away from the Sheik. The old man rewarded it with more liquor.

My attention was soon taken away from this exhibition of canine depravity by light steps on the stairway. I looked up, and immediately noted Joe Tenny a very lucky man. It was the bride.

She came down slowly, still humming the native lilt which I had heard before. Beneath the loose folds of a simple white gown, the curves of a rich and lissome figure were charmingly betrayed. She glanced at me, and I saw the great brown eyes, half-parted, scarlet lips, and heavy coils of dead-black hair. The presence of a stranger caused an embarrassed halt, and a shrinking as of cloistered girlhood. Over the face that had flashed upon me like a vision of Eastern passion, bewildered innocence fell like a veil.

But Joe reassured her with a word, and she started down again, while I followed her every motion with delight. The young husband then introduced me in his best American manner. She stood silent, and with lowered eyes, until Joe prompted her to shake hands, which she did in a timid, alien fashion. With these formalities ended, the girl engaged her husband in swift, low talk, speaking her own tongue. Joe responded glibly and gayly, while I, feeling superfluous since the bride's entrance yet unwilling to go away with such a picture before me, turned to the Sheik, who was glancing over his niece with an air of paternal proprietorship.

The back door had been left open since the departure of Hassan, and as I glanced into the alley, wondering how this fresh, Oriental flower would thrive in the environment of the Syrian colony, I saw the open square of pale sunlight was darkened by a bulky mass. It was the negro again, staggering in for another drink.

He lurched stupidly toward the bar, but stopped short when he caught sight of the girl. His face became bestial with lust, hideous as that of an obscene idol worshipped with nameless rites in the heat of gloom of a tropical forest.

At a command from Tenny, Leila hurried toward the stairway with swift, deer-like steps. The negro watched the little figure lecherously until it disappeared with the crash of a slammed door. Then he turned toward Tenny, and said something that voiced the admiration of the desert. He spoke with abysmal slime. He followed it with something more vile; a threat, a boast. It was worse than if he had spat in the young man's face.

Tenny paled with the passion to kill. On a table near his reach stood a heavy tumbler, and with the quickness of a striking snake he dashed it at the negro's head. Hassan dodged, and the missile shattered harmlessly against the wall. As the glass fell his hand, Tenny rushed madly into close quarters with his insult, but staggered away with a reddening shirt-sleeve, from a long knife that was waved menacing before his eyes. He was retreating toward the bar for his revolver; I was stooping to pick up an iron poker—when the Sheik screamed out something in Syrian.

Then without a growl the mastiff leaped from his corner at Hassan's throat. I saw the dog dash him to the floor, and heard a terrible yell that broke off at once into choking sounds. There followed a flail-like thrashing of limbs, the sound of a wild beast devouring, and the frequent lashing of a knife that stabs.

In that nightmare I remember begging a gray-bearded, toothy, insane, who jabbered in an outlandish tongue, to call his devil off; I remember seeing Tenny faint from loss of blood after stumbling across the room to hand me a revolver which was unloaded; I remember pounding feverishly at a growling thing with the poker.

Then the noise was stilled, and the heap of fur and clothes upon the floor became quiet. Beast had massacred beast.

I have not been in the shop since, but I went past it a few days afterward, and stopped to talk with the Sheik, who was masking in the doorway and smoking his meerschaum as usual. I asked him if he had ever heard an ancient tale of his own country—a tale about an Old Man of the Mountains, and his people, the Hashchischim, drug-dreamers who murdered at his will.

Yes, the Sheik admitted blandly; he had heard of such a folk.



She Never For a Moment Stooped to Mask Her Hate