

THE GOLDEN RULE

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SANDWICK, B.C.



No. 1
THE GOLDEN RULE STORYETTES

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The
GOLDEN RULE



By **L. H. GROVER**

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The Golden Rule Storyettes

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FOREWORD

In my mind is pictured a bit of this great world, located in the suburban district of a great city.

On a corner is a little store displaying a peculiar sign, its signia emblematical of the spirit prevailing in that small section owing to the example set by the true men and women of our story.

The motto of the sign is their guide, and is "The Golden Rule."

Gratefully yours,

The Author.

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CHAPTER I.

BILL BROWN'S ORPHANS

Among the mystifying marriages of the year eighteen hundred and ninety-six was that of William Brown to Myrtle Farrar, daughter of G. A. Farrar, B.A., known by his friends as "Grim" Farrar.

The only warm corner in "Grim's" heart was created by his love for horses, which became the indirect cause of the marriage, for contrary to "Grim's" strict adherence to the rule of "being shown," he employed unknown Bill Brown, who could furnish no credentials other than his remarkable skill as a horseman.

The marriage was duly discovered, "Grim's" weeping wife was locked in her room during the reign of terror in which the house was cleared of those who had offended him.

During the closing scenes of their ejection, the offenders faced a "Colts" .38 and a man whose thin lips were tight drawn spoke words as cold as the steel of the barrel that covered them as they swore never again to darken the doors of his home, "and, if you do," said "Grim," "I'll kill you as quickly as I would a dog that had bitten me. Now go!"

Failure of the man to become enriched by the marriage robbed it of any santifying qualities for him. Life to the woman became the customary hell upon earth, the man filling the role of Mephistopheles until the genuine ruler of Hades opened the portals of his domain to admit Bill Brown.

Had he arrived at the end of his crooked trail by a voluntarily act we might credit him with it, but as he neither directly nor indirectly participated in the firing of the Hun gun that made a "direct hit" upon, and scattered to the various winds, his useless carcass, gone was all chance of our ever crediting him with a good act.

An overload of whiskey caused him to enlist, giving a fictitious name, thereby depriving his family of a pension for, the Pension Board "regretted to report" it had no record of the William Brown in question, therefore, could not act.

After eighteen years of hell upon earth, Mrs. Brown died. Death would have been welcome had it not been for the motherlove for her children, Young Bill, Dorothy and wee Bobbie.

Soon after his father's death, Young Bill proceeded to prove himself to be a bad man in the making. Eighteen year old Dorothy, as the story runs, proves that an heritage wholly motherwise made her the exact opposite of the bad son. The Hun shell removed all chance of wee Bobbie growing up like his father.

The unhappy family had lived in practical seclusion, neither parent had ever mentioned relatives, a forbidden subject.

Dorothy found herself quite alone to face the problem of livelihood for Bobbie and herself.

"Niver moind," said Mrs. Murphy, Dorothy's next door neighbor, "yu'll be gettin' wurk in 'munitions' an I'll be of carin' for the wee one while yu bees there."

Dorothy laid her head on the broad expanse of Mrs. Murphy's apron bib and sobbed herself to sleep, the big-hearted daughter of Erin crooning a lullaby of her native land, sympathy filling her Irish blue eyes with tears.

Although burdened with six young Murphies, left fatherless when Michael's death made her a widow, Mrs. Murphy took command of the Brown household during the inelaborate funeral, financed with money rubbed from her washboard. She assisted Dorothy to secure work in a munition plant and to remain in the house made dear by association with her mother.

Dorothy's wages were sufficient to provide for Bobbie and herself, and to gradually lessen her monetary indebtedness to her neighbor. The one menace to her happiness was removed when Mrs. Murphy caught Young Bill in the act of extorting money from her on a payday. His departure was unceremonious and swift, by the way of the front door and steps, the latter used on the high spots only. In no uncertain terms he was told that he had better "kape away" or he would get hurt. Bruised spots here and there, and a rapidly closing eye convinced Young Bill that Mrs. Murphy was a lady not to be trifled with, and wisely decided to obey her. Nothing of further moment occurred for several months, her work and the cheery nature of her friend dulled the anguish of her great loss, reviving her youthful spirits as success crowned her efforts to provide for Bobbie and herself. Then she met with an accident that brought about a radical change in their lives.

While counting shells piled in pyramids on iron topped tables Dorothy thoughtlessly attempted to stay the progress of a pyramid that started to spread at the base. Her hand was caught between the spreading pyramid and the adjoining one and badly bruised. The factory physician dressed the wounded hand and told Dorothy the nail of her thumb would come off and several weeks would elapse before she could resume work. He, of course, failed to tell her the advantages of "The Workman's Compensation Act" and her little world, the two friendly households, knew nothing of the matter.

The Influenza broke out in the city, the friend's children contracted it, the friendly forces were divided, Dorothy's mind filling with apprehension, fearing Bobbie would be ill with the disease.

Matters grew grave, the injured hand was slow in healing, the friend's house was quarantined, loneliness settled on the orphan girl's spirits and she longed for someone in whom she could confide and ask for advice. She thought of Tom Blake, a blind man with whom she had chatted when buying small-wares from him at a corner she passed on her way to work. "Yes," she thought, "Tom is kind and true, I am certain, he will advise me what to do."

Dorothy went to Tom's corner, but he was not there. Her fears that he was among the many who had taken the influenza proved well founded, for a clerk in a nearby store told her he had been taken to the hospital, "a week ago."

The small sum saved for a rainy day was dwindling to its end, and hunger was threatening the orphans. It seemed to Dorothy that her only hope rested on the chance of Tom having recovered from illness. She put on her hat and jacket, told Bobbie not to leave the back yard, locked the front door as she went out, and hurried to Tom's corner.

CHAPTER II.

TOM BLAKE

Martial music and the tramp, tramp of troops passing the corner filled Tom's mind with memories of seeing days. He visualized passing men in the blue and red of his boyhood days, although those now passing the corner were khaki clad. His slightly stooped form straightened as he paced back and forth, the wind flappingly swaying the small reproductions of "The Old Flag" displayed for sale on the tray strapped about his neck. He heard the flap, flap, of the big flag carried at the head of the column of marching troops, his heart filling with patriotic

longing for sight so that he too might follow and fight for the sacred principles it represented. His steps timed themselves to the drumbeats of the band, his heartbeats quickening in his loyal breast.

The sound of martial music and the tramp, tramp of passing troops diminished and died away as "our boys" continued on their way to a Land of Glorious Deeds, in the doing of which many were destined to never return.

Tom stopped at the corner, his shoulders resumed their slight stoop as longing filled his heart, memories of bygone days his mind. A big Cadillac rolled to the curb and stopped, awakening him from his reverie, as a kindly voice said, "Good morning, Tom, how are you today?"

An expression of pleasure came to his face as Tom replied, "Fine, Mrs. Leslie, as to health, but it is hard to hear the boys marching away and not be able to go with them. Is Captain Leslie leaving soon?"

"Yes, Tom." Mrs. Leslie paused for a moment, then continued, "Earl leaves with his company day after tomorrow and we are giving him a farewell party to cheer him on his way. It will be held tomorrow night, so I ran around this way to ask you to come and hear the music and say good-bye to Earl."

"God bless your kindly heart," said Tom, "and may He bring your noble son safely home. We can not go, you and I, Mrs. Leslie, but there will be a work for us to do here at home. There will be many women and little children in need of aid when the war takes their loved ones from them. We must not forget our part then."

"No, Tom, we must not forget our part, and if you know or hear of any needy ones, let me know so I can help them." Tom's face was turned toward her own and Mrs. Leslie saw the beauty of his soul pictured in it, she choked back the swelling in her throat and continued, "I'll have the chauffeur come for you tomorrow evening."

The purring of the Cadillac increased in volume, Mrs. Leslie extended her arm, something dropped in Tom's money box and he knew another dollar was added to the many Captain Leslie's mother had given him. His words of gratitude were drowned in the "get away" of the Cadillac and reveries of the blind again possessed him.

The reveries were again broken, a small hand crept into his own and gently clasped it.

"Am I to guess who it is?" asked Tom.

"Oh, no, friend Tom, it is only me, Dorothy."

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Tom detected the forlornness in the intonation of her voice, his hand soothingly increased its pressure on the small one it enfolded, his other hand instinctively sought and found the little rounded chin and raised the face toward his own, visualizing the saddened features of a little girl.

"Tut, tut, little girl," and Tom's words were truly comforting as he continued, "tell Tom all about it. We will find a remedy, be the trouble ever so great."

Dorothy told Tom all that related to the crisis of the moment, his wonderful visualizing powers enabling him to picture every change of expression, even to the trembling lips. When she had told him all, he at once thought of Mrs. Leslie's request and smiled as he said, "Now, to begin, I want the little girl's pretty face, and I am sure it is a pretty one, to frighten away old sorrow with the sunshine of smiles." As if he really had seen the transformation caused by his words, Tom continued, "There, that is better. Now listen. I know you will not accept a gift from Tom, so I am going to ask you to accept a small loan, just for luck." Taking a bill from his pocket, he pressed it into her hand and said, "To speak, or look back breaks the spell and spoils the luck. Come back here in three days time, and if I am not greatly mistaken, a Fairy Godmother will have given me a message for you." Taking her by the shoulders Tom turned Dorothy around, and said, "One, Two, Three. Straight ahead. Forward! March!"

With the bill tucked in the pocket of her jacket, a happy little girl hurried along with mind busy laying plans, and with conjectures as to the meaning of Tom's words about the Fairy Godmother. Her thoughts were so intent on the future, Young Bill, who had been watching her and Tom, followed her without her seeing him.

When she arrived at the front door, she heard Bobbie crying in the back yard. Hurriedly entering the house, she quickly removed hat and jacket, laid them on the table and ran to the back yard. Bobbie saw her and ran to her, saying, "I'se hungry, awsul hungry, 'Doty.'"

"There, there, little brotherman, stop crying and kiss sister. Come into the house and Doty will run and get you some nice bread and milk."

Thoughts of bread and milk dried Bobbie's tears as Dorothy carried him into the house. Noticing that the front door was open, although she had closed it as she entered, Dorothy thought the wind had opened it, but, discovering her jacket on the floor instead of the table as she had left it, a suspicion of

wrong flashed through her mind. A hurried investigation proved that the bill had been taken from the pocket.

The courage and hope of a few moments gave way to despair as the motherless girl longed for the sympathy and help of one of her sex. The friendly neighbor was debarred from her assistance, the thought of returning to Tom was banished for fear he would think she had carelessly lost the bill, or was using a subterfuge to obtain more. "No," she thought, "for three days I must manage to get along alone."

A few small coins remained in the little jug on the pantry shelf, the last of the savings for "a rainy day," barely enough to buy a loaf of bread and a pint of milk. Hurrying to the store she made her purchases and returned to make a pretense of eating, Bobbie getting the "lion's share."

When night arrived, the meagre amount of food had lessened, only a small amount remaining. Bobbie became restless as the night advanced, moaning and tossing in his sleep. He awoke near midnight and cried for food. Dorothy tried to put him to sleep again by rocking him, but her efforts were unavailing until she had given him the remaining food.

Realizing that hunger would reassert itself in a few hours, Dorothy tried hard to think of a way to get food. "Oh," she thought, "if brother Bill had only been a good boy, he would have helped me instead of being cruel. How I wish I had been a boy instead of a helpless girl. I would even beg, for I know mother would rather that than have Bobbie hungry."

It was the latent mother instinct in her breast that caused the desire to succor the helpless young, as it was also the cause of her thoughts of being a boy. That instinct also took form in her brain as it conceived a plan whereby she would dress in an old cast off suit of Young Bill's and unafraid of the dangers to a girl on the street at night, as a boy she could ask for assistance.

She dressed in the old suit, as quickly as the injured hand would permit, tucked her hair under an old tweed cap, saw that Bobbie was quietly sleeping, then quietly passed out of the house by the way of the back door.

The back yard and lane were dark and fearsome to the poor child, but she bravely made her way to the street and the cheer of electric lights, they giving her courage to go on.

As Dorothy left the lane, a dark form crept from hiding in the back yard and followed her.

CHAPTER III.

THE BEGGAR AT THE GATE

Earle Leslie's farewell party was attended by the many friends of the family. Leslie, senior, had won his battle for wealth, and soon after the victory, was handed by "Father Time" to the Gods of his forefathers.

Fancifully clad and masked, youth danced to the creations of "masters" ("———save the mark") of modern dance music. Leslie Senior's spirit, had it been compelled to be present, no doubt would have struggled to return to a sphere where all attire is pure white, covering the wearer from neck ("The part of an animal's body between the head and trunk."—Chambers) to ankle ("The joint connecting foot and leg"—Chambers).

The days of athletic ability having passed over their heads, Mrs. Leslie and her bosom friend, Mrs. Doane, sat together watching the dancing of the son of the former, Captain Earl Leslie, and the daughter of the latter, Miss Phyllis Doane.

Phyllis was classed as a handsome brunette. She loved Earl and hated others who dared to entertain a thought of following suit. When she raised her face to look through the eyelets of her mask into those of Earl, her black eyes became as velvet. If she saw another girl casting admiring glances in his direction, the velvet turned to cold ebony. These traits of character were known by her girl friends and a dread of consequences removed all rivals for the hand of Earl Leslie.

Earl was a fine specimen of manhood, good to look upon and possessed of a nature the extreme opposite of the girl who so selfishly loved him. Broadminded, of a strong but gentle nature, kindly thoughts and actions marked his daily existence.

To avoid displeasing his mother, Earl hid his dislike of Phyllis Doane and for pomp and display; his ideal girl and home were plain ones devoid of shams and conventions. In truth he was the son of "Jim" Leslie before that worthy man evolved into "James Leslie, Limited."

The abandon with which Phyllis limped her form against his own, the cling of her bare arms and the pressure of her rounded chin were wasted wiles, defeating their aims when appraised at their worthlessness by Earl. These, the costume of a chevalier of the Sixteenth Century, his mother's choice, filled him with discomfort, made his head ache and filled him with longings for the open.

The orchestra brought the number to an end, filled with fortissimo clangor, termed harmony. Earl escorted Phyllis to a

seat beside the adoring mothers and in mock gallantry lifted his plumed hat, curtsied low as he craved permission to retire. The permission given, he soon was out on the front lawn, inhaling the clear night air as he looked up at the starlit sky and exclaimed, "Ye Gods, what a relief. Tom Blake is fortunate. He can enjoy the music without knowing that the truly blind are those who can but will not see."

Thoughts of his departure filled Earl's mind and he wondered if he would return to the scenes about him. He looked at the near-mansion that was his home, and the adjoining one belonging to the Doanes. He could not connect them with the dear old song "Home, Sweet Home," nor with the ivy-covered cot of the picture of the vision of a soldier dying on the field of battle, fading memory filled with the sweet faces of wife and babe in the cottage far away. "Simple and sweet," thought Earl, "the dwelling place of true grandeur in which love is unfettered by pride and pomp, a genuine "Home, Sweet Home." Hearing a noise in the direction of the front walk, he walked toward it and saw a small boy with an arm propped against the electric light post at the corner, the other arm at his side, the hand bandaged.

Opening the gate noiselessly, Earl walked to the boy and placed a hand on his shoulder. The boy sprang backward, rubbed his eyes and stared at Earl, a puzzled expression on his face, Earl then realizing his chevalier costume was the cause, said, "There—there, little boy, do not be afraid of me. I am only a page from a fairy tale, a good Prince who tries to make children happy so they will not cry, what may I do for you?"

From beneath the peak of an old tweed cap peered a pair of big eyes glistening with tears as a girlish voice replied, "I am crying because my little brother is hungry and there is no food in the house. We are very poor and my hand is hurt so I can not work. Please, sir, you may loan us a little money to buy food for three days, then I will give it back to you."

Remembering he was a chevalier without a purse, Earl continued to play the role of Prince, and said, "Wait here and I will go to my secret treasure chamber and get gold to buy bread for brother, lest he should die."

The boy was still standing at the electric light post when Earl returned, purse in hand. Taking a bill from the purse, he handed it to the boy and asked for his name and address.

The big blue eyes faltered in their gaze as he was asked for name and address, and he hung his head as if from shame. A sudden suspicion came to Earl, with catlike quickness a form

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sprang over the front fence, the purse was snatched out of his hand, the form was back over the fence and running across the lawn, the Prince in swift pursuit, his sword tripped him and he fell headlong.

By the time he had freed himself from the entangled sword equipment, Earl's purse was well away from him.

Returning to the electric light post, the boy was not be seen, Earl laughed, and thought, "'A fool and his money are soon parted,' but, as the principal witness have flown, the fool's friends will never know of his folly."

Rearranging his costume he returned to the ballroom where Phyllis impatiently waited for him, her jealous mind tortured with thoughts of his being in the company of some other girl.

* * * * *

As Earl stood against the rail of the promenade deck of the ocean liner that carried troops across the Atlantic, the land blurringly receded from sight. Visions of scenes usual to those who leave home, perhaps never to return, were not his for one scene insisted in blotting out all others, that of a boy standing beside an electric light post, tears in the big blue eyes that peered from beneath an old tweed cap. "The tears were genuine," thought Earl, "why then, was the boy a confederate of a crook?"

CHAPTER IV.

A PAGE FROM A FAIRY TALE

Dorothy had left her home with the intention of stopping at a nearby corner to solicit aid from passersby. As she came to corners conveniently lighted, the required courage failed her and she hurried on, thinking she would stop at the next one. Each effort failed in its purpose and she became tired and nervous.

Fasting in order that Bobbie might eat had weakened her bodily strength, the bruised hand ache and throbbed, the inclination to cry mastered her as she heard the sound of music, the music vividly impressed her with the irony of her position and she leaned against an electric light post, placed her face against her arm, uncontrollable sobs surging to her lips.

A hand placed on Dorothy's shoulder startled her, she sprang back and beheld a chevalier with plumed hat, mask and glittering sword. Conquering the desire to run away she answered the questions of the chevalier, waited his return, felt the bill pressed into her hand, saw Young Bill vault the fence and snatch the

purse, then dart away with the chevalier in pursuit. Terrified, she turned and ran aimlessly in the direction from which she had come, chance guiding her footsteps home.

No sound came from the house as she opened the door and tiptoed softly to the bedroom. Ten year old Katie Murphy was quietly sleeping beside Bobbie and Dorothy realized that the quarantine must have been lifted, Mrs. Murphy's first thought one of the welfare of her neighbor. With a sigh of relief, Dorothy went to the kitchen and found a pitcher of milk, loaf of bread and plate of cookies on the table.

Instinctively, as the hungry denizens of the forest imagine marauders are seeking their food, Dorothy's imagination caused her to rush to the door and lock it. The precaution was unnecessary for the only one who was likely to intrude was then filling his useless frame with food and drink purchased with the money from Earl's purse.

Knowing that Bobbie must have had his fill, Dorothy ate a bowl of bread and milk, thus sharpening the appetite dulled by long fasting, a second bowl followed the first. Hunger appeased, fatigue asserted itself; Dorothy placed her head upon her arm resting on the table, and fell to thinking of the strange happenings of the night. Sleep quickly came to her and brought dreams of the chevalier with mask and sword, proclaiming himself to be, "A Page from a fairy tale."

CHAPTER V.

KATIE O'SHAUGHNESSY MURPHY

The sun came up, his cheering rays shone through the kitchen window, crept along the table to the childish face pillowed on her arm, the big blue eyes opened and Dorothy was awake.

The arm that had pillowed her head was cramped and aching, tingling sensations thrilled through it as she moved it to a straightened position, but her mind was clear and active, its first thought of Bobbie.

Finding both children peacefully sleeping, she bathed her hands and face, the injured hand felt better and her youthful spirits attuned themselves with the sunshine streaming through the windows. The tattered suit of boy's clothing was quickly changed for her own, she combed her hair and hurried to tell Mrs. Murphy of the wonders of the night.

Mrs. Murphy listened with opened eyed wonder to the tale of the night, gave Dorothy a hug and a kiss and said, "Och, colleen, 'tis a brave sprite ye are, darlint, but the devil hisself

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has hauld of the brother. We must beware or h'll be of doin' ye harrum. Ye'll have a bite wid me, thin off ye go to the blind gentleman this afternoon. Ye'll be saying nothing to him of the wierd night you've had and he may thin have worrüd from the old lady, the Fairy Godmother. 'Tis likely the auld gentleman will be afther doin' ye a good turn."

A veritable friend in need was Mrs. Murphy, her heart built in proportion with her generous frame. It was a well fed, tidy little girl who left a haven of love that afternoon to go to Tom Blake. The kiss and hug Mrs. Murphy gave her at parting were of greater value than gold, for they came from a mine of great value when appraised in a mart that is Eternal.

Mrs. Murphy's surplus of sympathy broke from its confines after Dorothy had left her, and the corner of her apron was moist as she looked into the old mirror on the kitchen wall and to the anti drug store, rosy cheeked reflection of health and honesty said, "Katheleen O'Shaughnessy Murphy, 'tis a blubbering auld woman y're gettin' to be, lave off wid y're snivelling and get to worruk, ye auld goose."

Obeying the dictates of the old mirror, the music of her washboard was blended with a sweet soprano voice in a solo entitled "Killarney," emanating from a heart warmed by the glow that comes from adherence to "The Golden Rule."

CHAPTER VI.

TRUE HAPPINESS

So keen had become the senses of our friend, Tom Blake, by the sound of the footsteps of his many friends he could distinguish the approach of any one of them. He heard and recognized those of Dorothy, keenly detecting in her walk, anxiety and apprehension.

Dorothy stopped at Tom's side, he playfully assuming a serious air, pretending not to have heard her. Thinking he had discouraging news for her, Dorothy stood silent, Tom suddenly laughing as he said, "Well then, what has Tom done that keeps little girls from speaking to him?"

"Oh, nothing, friend Tom, and that pays for not speaking," said Dorothy as she kissed his cheeks.

"Yes, that pays, little girl, and you are forgiven, but, I'll bet you I know why you did not speak."

"Why?" asked Dorothy.

"Because so many people hold out false hopes to those, hoping for better things. Words are treated by them, as mean-

ingless things, expressive of themselves for they too are of little value. Scores have paused to speak to me and foolishly pity a very happy man. Had their words been of value, your friend Tom would long ago have been a millionaire. Little do they think that 'Blind Tom' knows that for some good reason God wishes some of his children to be blind, perhaps to test the hearts of those who can see, thus using us to be His blessed help-mates. Worldly wealth could not buy for them happiness as fills my heart this morning, for I have found a nice home for you and Bobbie."

Dorothy's heart filled with a great love for this Disciple of The Golden Rule, she threw her arms around his neck and said, "Oh, friend Tom, you are so good, just like Mrs. Murphy, how I wish you two would get married."

Tom's laugh was spontaneous, but it grew to a chuckle and ended with a sigh, then there was a pause before he answered. "No, little girl, marrying is not for me. Once I thought of marrying, a long, long time ago, in dear old Ireland. My eyesight even then was failing and I knew the time would come when darkness would overtake me. Like yourself, I was an orphan, living with a poor old lady, my aunt. Fearing to become a burden to her, I ran away and went to sea on a long cruise in a sailing vessel. When the cruise ended I was blind. An old sailor started me in this business and, hating to tell my old aunt and friends of my trouble, I never wrote to them. They must have long ago forgotten me, but God never forgets His children and He never has deserted me."

Hand in hand they stood on the corner, hearts full of that unknown something that makes life worth while, too full to speak.

Tom broke the silence.

"There are a few people who have not tired of being good to me. One of them, a Mrs. Leslie, asked me to let her know of any of my friends who needed aid, so I told her about you and Bobbie. She says both of you must come and live with her until she plans a future for you, and she will let me know when you are to go to her. So, run home now, come to me every day and let me know if you want anything while you are waiting."

Tom listened to the footsteps going from him, the anxiety and apprehension had left them, he turned around, to his dear face came an expression beautiful to behold, for in his heart lived "True Happiness."

CHAPTER VII.

RIVALRY

Two weeks after Tom told Dorothy of her good fortune, Mrs. Leslie called at the misnomered home of the orphans and made all necessary arrangements for their removal to her home.

Mrs. Murphy thanked Mrs. Leslie for her kindness, calling down upon her head all the blessings of all the Saints. She gave Dorothy and Bobbie a good hug and kiss and wished them all the good things in the world. After her little friends had left her, Katie O'Shaughnessy Murphy and the old mirror held communion which ended with the accusation, "Y're a blubbering old omadhaun."

To the orphans the change seemed like a happy dream. New dresses were in the making, a governess was employed to take charge of Bobbie, an instructor to teach Dorothy. Toys that Bobbie had looked upon with longing as they lay in store windows now lay in profusion on the nursery floor.

The man, who in his bigness of heart had wrought the good that had come as a result of his love for others, was not less happy than those most benefitted by that love.

Dorothy recognized her new home as the scene of her meeting with the masked chevalier and wondered if he were a member of the family or an invited guest to the masked ball. In either case they might some day meet and he might recognize her as the beggar at the gate, and her happy dream become a hideous nightmare. An inclination to tell Mrs. Leslie of the incident was banished at thought of possible ruination to Bobbie's happiness.

Dorothy's mind had reached the stage of development that makes apprehension possible, a condition which robs a joyous present of its joy, the future of its beautiful possibilities, if unwisely permitted to do so.

Bobbie's mind was not developed to the stage of endeavor to fathom the future nor delve in the past. His days were replete with the happiness of a wonderful present in a world full of sunshine and toys.

Ever present in Dorothy's mind lurked the fear of detection as the sister of a "purse-thief."

In the reception hall of the house a life-size picture of Earl graced the wall. This held a strange fascination for Dorothy and he often stood before the picture trying to discover a resemblance to the chevalier, with the result that her nervous apprehension once produced an illusion in which the picture changed to the chevalier smiling down upon her.

Phyllis, who was a daily caller at the house, caught Dorothy admiring the picture in the hall, her jealous mind filled with hatred, and she asked Dorothy if she thought the picture a nice one.

"Yes," replied Dorothy, "I think it is beautiful and that he must be grand and good."

"He is grand and good," said Phyllis, and her voice belied her anger as she falsified the facts by saying, "We are sweet-hearts and will be married after the war, but as we wish it kept secret you must not tell anyone."

Although a child in years as experience counts, Dorothy realized that the picture had instilled her heart with a desire to ever be near the original of it, and that Phyllis Doane's statement meant death to any hope she might entertain. The statement caused pain, but Phyllis was denied the pleasure of gloating over the fact for in Dorothy's veins ran a goody portion of the blood of "Grim" Farrar, and Phyllis looked into a pair of blue eyes that smiled as Dorothy said, "How happy you must be to be loved by him, and how grand it will be to have the honor of making him happy after the war."

Inborn instinct warned each that the other was a menace to her happiness. They could neither tell why, but was it not the law of rivalry that prevails wherever life in its many forms battles for supremacy?

* * * * *

Several uneventful months passed while Bobbie grew rosy cheeked and rugged, the change even more pronounced in Dorothy. Correct fitting clothing, worn with a grace that was her natural heritage, and these enhanced by a pretty face and loving nature had changed the child of a squalid house to a beautiful girl in full accord with her new environments.

Phyllis saw the growing change in Dorothy and with it grew her hatred for her. She was ever alert to detect a flaw in the armour of sweet innocence that guarded Dorothy's future. She knew that Mrs. Leslie was naturally generous and kind-hearted, also that she had in some way learned of the story of "Grim" Farrar's daughter and that he was a descendant of a worthy family. Jealousy raged in her heart and anything that would prevent Earl from being exposed to the charms she realized Dorothy possessed, would not be beyond her doing.

Mrs. Leslie accepted an invitation to spend the summer months with her sister, Mrs. Carlisle, of Shaughnessy Heights, Vancouver. Learning of this, Phyllis cleverly shammed illness and her physician advised a change of climate. As Mrs. Leslie

had decided to take Dorothy with her, Mrs. Doane suggested that Phyllis would be company for her, the natural result being an invitation for Phyllis was quickly accepted.

CHAPTER VIII.

A MENACE

Although Bobbie would have the watchful care of his governess while she was away from him, Dorothy wished Mrs. Murphy and Tom to occasionally call upon him. She had meant to have her two stanch friends meet each other before she departed for Vancouver, but the many preparations for the journey had consumed all the available time. Mrs. Leslie readily gave her consent to have them call, and instructed the chauffeur to take Dorothy to see them on the morning they were to start.

The arrival of the Cadillac at the Murphy home was a clamorous occasion for the "doorsteps." They joyfully and noisily greeted Dorothy and then promptly forgot her presence to investigate the wonders of the Cadillac, the chauffeur joining in the spirit of the occasion by letting the "bigger'n him" ones honk the horn and make believe driving.

Mrs. Murphy's greeting was like unto herself, wholesouled and hearty, her embrace awe inspiring, leaving much to do in the way of rearranging fine raiment, hat and hair.

"Ah, colleen, 'tis a famous beauty the leddy is gettin' to be, an' sure 'tis soon ye'll be too ristikratic to spake to poor auld Katie Murphy. Pity 'tis the poor mither, pace be unto her ashes, can't see the child this blissid minit." Kate dabbed her eyes with the corner of her apron and literally carried Dorothy into the house.

"Katie" was intensely human and excusable for the thoughts of neighbors having a peek at the big Cadillac with its crew of romping Murphyites, whose shouts Katie heard as her jovial countenance glowed with pride and she in servile mimicry dusted the big wooden rocker with her apron and said, "Plaze be seated, my ladyship, an' do y're humble servint the honor of sippin' a cup of tay with her."

Over the teacups they talked of the trip to Vancouver, of Phyllis and of Bobbie, Mrs. Murphy promising to call on him as often as possible.

Goodbyes were said, the romping Murphyites were driven from the Cadillac, Dorothy entered, tears coming to her eyes as she looked at the place next door that had been the scene of a

sorrow she could never forget. The old house was still vacant, the same old shades covered the windows as when she left it.

Unknown to the neighbors, the old house occasionally housed Young Bill, who came to it at odd times, there to hide for a day or to sleep off a debauch of the night before. He was there the morning Dorothy called to say goodbye to Mrs. Murphy, the noisy Murphyites wakened him and from behind the old shade he saw Dorothy enter the car and drive away. With the keenness of his criminal mind, Young Bill noticed the number of the car and repeated it in his mind in order to remember it, saying to himself, "Oh, oh, the dear sister is a lady, is she? There must be some rich friends in the family, Brother Bill must look into this for he really has need of rich friends and their coin."

CHAPTER IX.

SATAN ASSISTS

Mrs. Carlisle, of Shaughnessy Heights, was a prominent member of Vancouver's social circles, and an active worker for charitable and religious institutions. Her many friends left little to be desired by her guests, in the way of entertainment.

Phyllis was in her natural element and exercised every art at her command to impress all with her accomplishments, her chief aim being that of belittling Dorothy by comparison. She, on opportune occasions hinted that Mrs. Leslie would be happy when Earl returned from the war, and that she, Phyllis, longed for the time when they three would never again become separated. Thus it became understood that Phyllis was engaged to Earl.

Dorothy was unaccustomed to the ways of society, her timidity was taken as a lack of "class," Phyllis profiting by the fact. Mrs. Leslie saw Dorothy's failure to adjust herself to the occasion, and, with the help of little remarks by Phyllis, she became influenced against Dorothy, her desire being to have her become an acquisition to society, the same as Phyllis.

With womanly instinct Dorothy came to the realization that she was losing ground, and sensed the part Phyllis was playing in that loss. The inherited fighting spirit of "Grim" again came to the fore and the tables were soon turned on her enemy by Dorothy's great popularity when she threw off her timidity and enthusiastically joined in the moods of the "Circle."

Dorothy's success, Mrs. Leslie's renewed admiration for her, and Phyllis' chagrin grew apace. In a fair field and no

favors, Dorothy would have continued her victories, but Satan evidently decided to assist in her defeat, for the forces of two of his imps, Phyllis and Young Bill, were to become united and bitter potions were in the making for Dorothy.

CHAPTER X.

THE COMMANDING OFFICER

Captain Earl and his gallant company saw much hard fighting, their battalion formed a part of the Second Canadian Division, which was practically "wiped out" in one of the great battles.

Earl received a wound from a piece of shell, which plowed a furrow across his right shoulder. Despite the wound, he stuck to his post until the battalion was extricated from the bad position it was placed in by the failure of the battalion on its right to "keep in touch." When reinforcements came up and covered the exposed flank, Earl swooned from loss of blood and was carried by stretcher bearers to the dressing station behind the lines.

Arriving at the Base Hospital, his first thought was to allay his mother's anxiety should she have heard of his wound. He succeeded in getting a cable through, in which he stated, "Wounded, a mere trifle, do not worry." This was followed by a letter written by a nursing sister and in which he informed her he was to be sent to "Blythe," to convalesce and he would write her from there.

A month in "Blythe," thanks to his splendid physical condition and the skill of the "M.O." his wound had progressed so favorably that he secured "sick leave, in Canada," for a period of two months.

Letters from his mother in Vancouver notified him that she had received his letter and cable and would remain there unless further news necessitated a change of plans. On receipt of her letters, Earl decided to arrive home without advising his mother he was coming. He could rest a few days at home, then proceed to Vancouver. Exceptional good luck assisted him and he soon was on board the good old "Scandinavian," homeward bound.

Arriving at the gates of his home in Westmount, he saw a miniature soldier playing on the front lawn and wondered who he could be. Mrs. Doane was sitting on the front verandah and hurried to meet and greet him. In answer to her inquiries he told her he was getting along nicely and did not wish Mrs. Leslie or

Phyllis to know he had returned as he wished to surprise them, and would proceed to Vancouver as soon as he had a rest.

Turning to the miniature soldier, who had drawn near, Earl said, "Who have we here?"

Before Mrs. Doane could reply, the miniature soldier clicked together the heels of his little boots, and said, "Private Smif, Sir, at your servith, Sir!"

Earl laughed heartily and the governess, who had been watching the group at the gate, smiled as she realized the training by a certain sergeant major had been very efficient.

Mrs. Doane explained Bobbie's presence and then told as little as possible about Dorothy.

"Dear old Mater," said Earl, "just like her isn't it?" He looked thoughtfully at "Private Smif" and continued, "This soldier looks good to me, and if Mater wants to take a couple of orphans under her wing, I am with her to the finish." Then with mock seriousness he said, "Excuse the party, Mrs. Doane, if it pleads hunger and fatigue, and parades before the housekeeper for rations and billets. 'Party—Shun!'" Bobbie did it nicely. "Party will move to the house in single file, 'Fall in!'" Bobbie took his position behind Earl. "Quick—March!"

Mrs. Doane could not help smile as they marched away from her, Earl shortening his pace to accommodate the short stride of Private Smif, but the smile faded as she thought of the letter received from Phyllis telling of Dorothy's unwarranted success and popularity and filled with bitter criticisms. She returned to her home and wrote a long letter to Phyllis and concluded it with the words, "Remember, 'All is fair in love or war.'"

"The Party" had preceeded with military precision to the housekeeper's quarters to requisition rations and billets, from there to Earl's room where it was called to attention, dismissed with the instructions to answer the whistle call for lunch, in the commanding officer's room.

By the time the governess had brushed the little boots, given the buttons an extra shine and the hands and face of Private Smif a treatment of soap and water, the whistle sounded and "The Party" was not late on parade.

To Earl the company of a child who saw naught but glory in the life of a soldier, a child whose plans for a military career were made through rainbow hues, was a real diversion to Earl despite the fact he knew the stern realities. "For such as these," thought Earl, "We must win or die."

When Bobbie had told all his mighty plans to kill off all the Huns, and then come home to take care of "Doty," Earl said, "Does sister 'Doty' like soldiers?"

"Oh, yeth," said Bobbie, "she likes em, the one downstairs beth of all. Every day she uthed to tell me he wath fitin for us and at we muth pray for hith safe return, and onct, I seed her stand on a chair and kith im."

Wondering who the soldier down stairs might be, he asked Bobbie to take him to see him. Arriving in front of Earl's picture, Bobbie pointed at it and said, "Ther he ith, thats 'im," then noticing the striking resemblance to Earl, he excitedly exclaimed, "Oh, ith you, Commanding Ossifer, ith you."

Earl caught up the excited Private Smith, kissed him and said, "Yes, Private Smif, and I am going to see sister Dorothy and thank her for her prayers."

A few days of delightful companionship, then they separated, Earl to journey to Vancouver, to see his mother and the girl whom Bobbie had told much about, and which had filled his heart with an intuitive mellowness for her.

CHAPTER XI.

THE VERANDAH GIRL

From Bobbie's description of his mother, father, Dorothy and Young Bill, Earl formed conclusions in which Dorothy figured as a very brave girl. He resolved to do what he could to prevent a repetition of the hardships she had endured.

Bobbie, of course, knew but little of Young Bill's true character, but he had seen him drunk, heard him ask his mother for money and strike her because she could not give it to him. On learning of this, Earl thought, "If my hands ever have a chance to lay hold of that cur, I'll pay off that score with interest compounded."

By a strange coincident these thoughts were in Earl's mind as the train he had taken for Vancouver was pulling out of Kamloops. In one of the empty cars of a freight train waiting to follow the passenger train, a sinister face looked through a crack in the door, its owner sneeringly saying, "Go on, you swell guys, I'll get there just the same and maybe some of you live in the house my dear little sister will give brother Bill the key to, so he can help you get rid if your surplus cash."

Bill had made good use of his knowledge of the number seen on the Cadillac by getting acquainted with the chauffeur and keeping informed as to Dorothy's movements. Her trip spoiling immediate action, Bill decided to follow her.

Mrs. Leslie had often boasted about her complete immunity from "nerves," Earl, therefore, decided to arrive at the Carlisle residence unannounced. Arriving in Vancouver he made the necessary arrangements for transportation of his trunk, engaged an automobile at the station doors and leaned back on the comfortable cushions, glad that the long journey was over.

The usual volume of traffic was threading its way through the crossings of Granville and Georgia Streets, and when Earl's car moved up Granville to Georgia, W. J. Fisk, the genial traffic officer was directing the flow of traffic through Georgia Street, Earl's chauffeur waiting for the signal to proceed.

In a limousine crossing Granville Earl saw his mother, Mrs. Carlisle, Phyllis and another girl, but decided the better thing for him to do was to let them go on undisturbed while he proceeded to the Carlisle residence and took a good rest, as the trip had been very tiring.

It was a glorious morning, Vancouver was consoling and Shaughnessy Heights was making good all claims made by the justly proud residents of that beautiful section. At the Carlisle residence Earl stopped the driver at the gate as he wished to walk through the fine grounds of the place.

There was no one in sight as Earl ascended the stone stairway leading to the verandah. He was about to ring for admittance to the house when he heard a noise on the verandah as if some slight object had fallen to the floor. A Japanese screen stood at one end of the verandah and beneath the screen on the floor, Earl saw a lady's slipper, no doubt the cause of the noise.

"A lady's slipper," thought Earl, "A very dainty one at that, and were I a giddy youth, I suppose I would say, 'Cupid is abroad this morning, shooting darts and dropping slippers to catch the unwary in love's net, and expecting me to peep over the top of yon screen to meet my fate.' However, being unromantic, and a soldier unafraid of spells and charms, I'll take a peep anyway."

Tiptoeing to the screen, Earl's goodly height enabled him, by standing on tiptoes, to peer over the top of the screen. In a hammock lay the owner of the dainty slipper. Her slipperless foot hung limp over the edge of the hammock and Earl's "unromantic" claims were disputed by his quickening pulses that informed him that from the tip of the great toe of her slipperless foot to the top of the shapely head crowned with a wealth of brown hair, daintiness reigned supreme. One arm was upstretched and clinging lightly to the hammock rope, the other was gracefully bowed over her head. The boasting soldier noted the clear whiteness of the arms from which the silken waist

sleeves had slipped, the faint pencilling of blue veins above the temples, the perfect mould of the girlish features. A study in colors, nature's own, skin of finest texture, white with the bloom of youth on cheeks and lips, accentuated by well defined eyebrows and lashes of a color darker than her hair.

As an artist pauses before his picture on the easel before him, feeling that there is an inconceivable something lacking to satisfy a vague longing in his soul, perhaps some further bit of color to make the picture "live," Earl, the "unromantic," unconsciously spellbound, so craved for something to release him from the strained position of tiptoeing.

As the artist would daub his pastel with one color, and then another, then apply the combination lightly here and there, to a sky perhaps too light, nature aided Earl with the laws of concentrated vision of being upon being. The long lashes quivered, then haltingly lifted from eyes not o'er deeply tinted with blue, their gaze blankly directed upward. As the pupils focused to clearly film an object foreign to the recent filmed ones, they concentrated on the eyes of a man peering over the top of the screen. The blue deepened in shade to azure, the bloom crimsoned to a blushing red that rioted through the surrounding whiteness.

Earl's tensed muscles spasmodically relaxed and dropped him flatfootedly to the floor. He stepped back a pace and stood still, his mind accusingly confused, his pulse laughing at his idle boast.

Earl could not see the wee foot that toed into the slipper, then disappear, n'or hear the slight straining of ropes before there was true silence behind the scree.

Slowly came the realization that he should take the initiative and break the silence. Mustering a courage which for the first time had deserted him, he said, "I apologize for my rudeness which was due to pure thoughtlessness I assure you, and I trust you are not offended beyond pardoning me."

Silence.

Thinking of the dainty slipper on the floor, he stepped back a pace and stooped to see if it was still there. It was not. Straightening up again, blood rushed to his head and Earl felt of his cheeks to ascertain if they really were burning. They were. "Ceaser's ghost!" he thought, "Have I the fever again, or am I 'seeing things.' Guess I'll try the lingo of 'Blythe.' 'Are you there!'"

Silence.

Now thoroughly vexed at the predicament he had placed himself in, Earl decided to end the strain that was trying his recently shattered nerves, so he boldly stepped to the end of the screen and peered around it at the hammock. It was empty.

Thinking the train journey had been too much for him, Earl sank down upon the hammock and rested. When he felt better he rang the doorbell and was ushered to a seat in the reception hall by the maid who answered the bell. She told him "the folks" were out for the day, with the exception of Miss Brown, who no doubt would come to him.

The maid gone, Earl tried to compose his mind for the meeting with Miss Brown, who, no doubt was Dorothy. Thinking of the refined beauty of the girl in the hammock, his sound sense informed him that whoever she was, her geneology would trace back to blood of high respectability.

His thoughts were interrupted by a noise at the head of the stairway leading from the hall and all doubts as to Miss Brown and the girl of the hammock being one and the same were swept aside as she gracefully descended and came to him with outstretched hand, an enquiring look in the eyes "not o'er deeply tinted with blue."

Taking the hand in his own, Earl felt the blood that rushed to his cheeks as he said, "I am Earl Leslie, home on sick leave. The maid said Miss Brown would come to me and I wish to—to—to—"

The "to's" were halted by her voice, which steadied him as she said, "Yes, I am Miss Brown, but my friends call me Dorothy. I had a severe headache this morning and your dearest of mothers wished me to remain home today. You look fatigued by your long trip. I will see the housekeeper at once and have her assign you a room. Please wait here a few moments."

Earl heard the words and vaguely understood their meaning, but his sub-conscious self was groping to understand an intangible something that lay hidden in the wonderful blue of her eyes. From the depths of somewhere his mind was striving to refilm a scene in which he had before seen those eyes. His release was not accomplished until the little hand struggled out of his own and The Verandah Girl had disappeared beyond the top of the stairs.

In the seclusion of the room assigned to him by the housekeeper, Earl tried to analyze the situation. Up to the moment he had peered over the top of the screen, his future had been clearly outlined, at least he had so thought. Now "Well,"

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thought Earl, "something has gone wrong with this soldierman's solar plexus or some other internal pilot that is steering unknown senses across the course of known ones. Anyway, guess the wires are all twisted. I'll curl up on this chesterfield and sleep it off."

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Mrs. Leslie and the other occupant's of the limousine continued their way to New Westminster to spend the day with Mrs. J. J. Taylor. It was late when they arrived home that evening and Earl awakened to look up into the eyes of his mother.

A fond embrace and o'erflowing hearts of mother and son, and they sat on the chesterfield, she to ask the many questions natural to the occasion. He in turn questioned her as to the welfare of friends and as to her own health and mind. "All has gone well at home, Earl," said Mrs. Leslie, "but I fear the taking of strangers into our midst has been a mistake."

"Why do you think that, mother mine?" asked Earl.

"Because one never knows how they will turn out, and Phyllis thinks Dorothy is too forward with men, and Phyllis is a very good judge of human nature. She has also missed little things from her room, trifles it is true, but I am worried over that."

Earl felt like telling his mother of the pleasant hours he had spent with Private "Smif" and that he had found the boy possessed of a very fine nature, also that he had seen Dorothy and if he were any judge of refinement she possessed every attribute of it. He thought it better to reserve his opinions until he could watch what was going on and from his observations form conclusions. To his mother he said, "Dear old Mater, you must not worry unless something more tangible turns up. It is not fair to condemn the child on circumstantial evidence, which always contains a doubt. Until there is better proof of wrongdoing you should give her the benefit of the doubt."

Phyllis, who had been eavesdropping at the door, moved away as she heard Earl's voice, then noisily returned to the door and knocked. Upon being admitted, her sweet ways and words belied the bitterness in her heart. They talked until a late hour and retired. Earl's last waking thoughts were sweet ones, those of Phyllis were bitter ones and they boded ill for "The Verandah Girl."

CHAPTER XII.

THE PAST

Earl's presence among the young people of Mrs. Carlisle's many friends and acquaintances increased the efforts to entertain. Phyllis gave no one an opportunity to be alone with Earl, Dorothy in particular. With the unfairness of her mind poisoned with jealousy, she continued her tactics to turn Mrs. Leslie against Dorothy.

Dorothy noticed the coolness that manifested itself in Mrs. Leslie's attitude towards her, and thinking it due to her acceptance of the many attentions Earl gave her, and to his engagement with Phyllis, she became very unhappy and quiet, her heart filling with a desire to return to her former life.

Earl saw the trend matters were taking and was all for Dorothy, although he fully realized his mother thought she was acting for his interests. Dorothy had made no mention of their first meeting and he had refrained from referring to it. They had danced and talked together but Phyllis allowed no opportunity for a few words in privacy, that which Earl desired to have, as he had decided to take a hand in the uneven and unfair battle against Dorothy.

An opportunity came, at an informal gathering and dance. The friends present had seen and heard of the lessening of respect to Dorothy by Mrs. Leslie, and Phyllis had put in a damaging word here and there, the usual happening. Several numbers had been danced without Dorothy being asked to participate. Earl was dancing with Phyllis when he saw Dorothy quietly leave her seat and enter the conservatory. The number finished, he accompanied Phyllis to a seat, thanked her for the number and excused himself to have a smoke in the billiard room.

Passing through the billiard room, Earl walked along a path to where he could look into the lighted conservatory, a careful scrutiny of it proved it to be vacant. Continuing along the path, he saw the outline of a girl seated on a bench beside it, a short distance ahead. Her position was one of dejection, her face hidden in her hands. Feeling certain that the girl was Dorothy, Earl went to her and said, "I trust you will pardon the intrusion, Dorothy, you know you told me your friends called you by that name and I wish to be a friend, and as such I trust you will tell me if there is anything I may do to make you happy, for I feel that you are unhappy. Has anyone been unkind to you?"

With difficulty she conquered the desire to cry, and said, "It is nothing, Mr. Leslie. I should be very happy and very

thankful for the many kindnesses extended to Bobbie and I by your dear mother, but longing to see brother and my former friends has filled my heart, and I wish to return to them. At first the thoughts of Bobbie's future prevented me from studying the position, but of late I have studied it more carefully and it appears plain to me that I should return to work and the old life at home."

Earl knew she was sincere in her reasoning, but he also knew why she had so reasoned and he admired the principles that made her refrain from stating the naked truth. Wishing to know more fully than he gathered from others, her past life, he said, "May I sit beside you, Dorothy?"

Dorothy hesitated and said, "Is it prudent to do so? Someone may see us here and consider it wrong."

"Oh, d——, I beg your pardon," said Earl, "I do not gauge my actions by the standards of others. I wish to know more of your past life and if you wish to tell of it to me, here, it is our business, and if others make it theirs, it will not be well for them." Seating himself beside her, he continued, "Please tell me of your childhood days."

"There is not much to tell. Father was a great horseman and worked for men who owned beautiful horses. When I was a very little girl he used to take me to see the horses he loved, and let me put my little hands on their silken coats and velvet muzzles. We moved from place to place and as I grew older I knew our moving about was caused by father losing his position because he drank."

She paused a moment as if lost in memories of the days recalled, and passing through her mind. When she resumed her narrative there was a wistfulness in her voice that told of a great love. "Mother was beautiful, so sweet and good. I remember her sweet smile as she would put her arms around father's neck and plead with him to give up drink. Even when he had fallen so low he would strike her, she would forgive him and smile through tears as he promised never again to drink. At times we were left alone and there would not be much to eat, but mother would work and care for us as best she could."

There was another pause, her head lowered to her hands but she did not cry. Again she spoke, "The last time we went to father he had taken William, my eldest brother with him and had secured work in Montreal. We lived at Point St. Charles. Again drink caused him to lose his position and he blamed mother for all his troubles, struck her with his fists and left us. We never heard of him after that. Mother tried to work, but

she fell ill and a widow woman who lived next door took care of us until mother died. She had a doctor come to see mother but it was too late."

She again became silent with bowed head, crying softly. Earl's heart filling with sympathy for her and condemnation for those who persecuted one who had lived a life so unlovely, and had so little deserved it. He took in his hand the little one near him, caressed it and said, "Did your mother ever speak of her parents?"

"No, only to tell me that I must never ask anything about them when father was near, and that some day she would tell me of them. I do not think she realized she was so ill or she would have told me of them. She faded away like a pretty flower that had been broken by the cruel wind and, just before she died, she drew me to her breast and whispered, 'Always be a good girl and take care of Bobbie for mother's sake. Mrs. Murphy will help you until she hears from your grandfather, in reply to a letter I have written him. If he comes tell him I died loving him, and ask him to forgive me.' She tried to say more but her voice became so faint I could not hear the words, her hands dropped to her sides and I ran to tell Mrs. Murphy. She died in Mrs. Murphy's arms and brother and I were alone. Oh, how I missed her, how I miss her now, for it seems as if—no—one—wants—me—around. We did love each other, oh, so—much. I must go back to Mrs. Murphy and the old life, she loves me and is good to every one. Please, please—tell—them—to—send—me—home, please—do—."

She had become near hysterical and Earl had heard a foot-fall nearby and wishing to quieten her he moved close and whispered, "Someone does care for you and wants you near him always, has wanted you ever since you ran away from him on the verandah, but you must not cry or make a noise for someone is watching us."

At his words she involuntarily moved nearer to him, a feeling of comfort and aid filling her heart. There was no thought of wrong doing in her submission to the encirclement of her shoulders by the arm that crept around them. With the confidence of a child seeking protection, she snuggled against Earl's breast, he caressingly pushed her hair back from her forehead and sealed an unspoken declaration of affection with a kiss upon it, then whispered, "Remain here and keep silent."

Crouching low, Earl moved quietly around to a position where the point from which came the sound of footsteps was between him and the lights from the conservatory windows.

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Outlined against the lighted background was a form a short distance from the bench. A sarcastic smile came to his lips as he thought, "Just what I expected you to do, Miss Phyllis."

Keeping the eavesdropping Phyllis in sight, Earl noisily started towards her, she darting toward the conservatory and passing through it.

Returning to the bench, Earl saw Dorothy had left it. "Poor child," he thought, "She has become frightened and embarrassed and has taken refuge in her room."

He returned to the ball room and took up the thread of action he had left off, acting as if nothing had occurred during his absence. Dorothy was not there, and Earl smiled at the clever deceitfulness of Phyllis, who was ignorant of the fact that she had been detected in her little-mindedness.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE IMPS CONSPIRE

Bill and the freight train arrived in Vancouver two days later than the passenger train carrying Earl. Bill soon found a kindred spirit and took him into his confidence, learning that this confidant was acquainted with one of the maids employed by the Carlisles.

"The devil takes care of own," and Bill soon was being financed by his friend and making headway in his attempt to get into the good graces of Mary, the girl who worked at the house he intended to rob by frightening Dorothy into assisting him. He told Mary that he had come to Vancouver to find a wayward sister who had planned to swindle a rich man visiting at Carlisles. He, Bill, felt terrible over the matter and wanted to get word to his sister without getting her into trouble, and ask her to go back home with him. From Bill's description of "Flora," her real name Bill said, Mary knew he meant Dorothy.

Mary was persuaded to place a letter written by Bill, in Dorothy's room, where she would find it before any other person saw it.

On the night of the informal party and dance, Mary placed the letter in a book Dorothy was reading and had left on a little stand beside her bed. When she resumed her reading she would find the letter and no one in the house would be the wiser. Bill was satisfied with the plan and waited for a reply from Dorothy, his letter asking her to mail the reply care of "General Delivery, City." At least that is what he told the unsuspecting Mary.

And so it happened, on the night of the conversation between Earl and Dorothy, and she ran to her room to retire, she lay in bed with the glow of renewed hope in her heart, while within arm's length, like a poisonous thing waiting to strike dead that hope, lay Bill's letter.

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Contrary to his expectations, Earl's marked attentions and courtesies to Dorothy made more wretched her lot. Phyllis won Mrs. Carlisle as an ally and they "snubbed" her in the presence of others. She and Mrs. Carlisle completely banished all remaining good feeling in Mrs. Leslie's heart. Dorothy became in the estimation of all, except Earl, a flirt conspiring for the hand of a rich man.

Earl was no exception to the blindness of love and saw nothing but the beauty of its idol, but with the keener perception of a woman, Dorothy knew she was despised, and her womanly spirits revolted, she decided to run away from those who persecuted her. She wrote to Mrs. Murphy and asked her to send money by return mail so she could return home and go to work again.

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Two weeks passed, Young Bill waited in vain for a reply to his letter. Irritability got the better of his vile temper and he quarrelled with his friend. Knowing the location of Mary's room at Carlisle's, Bill went there and climbed to the roof of the back porch and tapped on the window of Mary's room.

The household had retired for the night and Mary was preparing to go to bed when she heard tapping on the window. Then the window sash slowly raised and the leering face of Bill appeared.

Thoroughly frightened, Mary backed away to the wall and said, "Bill! What are you doing here. Please, please do go away. You can not come in."

"Can't I?" said Bill, "I'll show you what I can do," entering as he spoke, "Now, look here, you make a holler and it will be bad for you, get me?"

Mary saw the dangerous gleam in Bill's eyes and checked the cry she was about to utter. Completely cowed, she said, "What do you want, Bill?"

"I want you to make good for the lie you told about giving that letter to my sister, now you go get her and bring her here, d——n you!"

Thinking Bill had told her the truth about his wanting to save a wayward sister, Mary could see no good reason why she should not go and get Dorothy.

Receiving no answer to her first knock at the door of Dorothy's room, Mary repeated the knock but feared to knock loudly as the household might waken, she therefore decided to enter and waken Dorothy by speaking to her. Opening the door softly she entered the room and in the semi-darkness saw that it had not been used after being "made up," the bed undisturbed.

The room suddenly flooded with light and Mary wheeled around to be confronted by Phyllis who said, "Mary, what does this mean, why are you here at this hour of the night?"

Mary hesitated, but an imperative "Tell me!" convinced her that she should tell the facts.

"Very well, Mary," said Phyllis, when she had heard all, "I believe you for I have always thought Dorothy that kind of a girl. Now come to your room with me and we will talk with Dorothy's brother."

As they entered the room Bill darted toward the window but Phyllis quickly said, "Don't be afraid, I want to be your friend and help you." As Bill hesitated, Mary added her words to those of Phyllis, saying, "Please don't go Bill, the lady is telling the truth and will be our friend."

Although Phyllis hated Dorothy, she knew the man before her was a criminal who for some reason, probably money, had lied about her. Her best plan, she thought, was to make him think she believed him, and in some way get him to incriminate Dorothy in the mind of Earl, while she, Phyllis did not appear to have a hand in that incrimination.

"Who was the man Dorothy followed?" asked Phyllis.

"I don't know his name," replied Bill, "but he is the guy sister and I framed up to rob one night at a mask ball back home. He was dressed up in a plumed hat and a sword, sister dressed as a boy and faked a sore hand. She must have went back to the guy and got in wid him by lying about me. A friend of mine told me when the guy came back from the war she had got in wid his mother and came out here. I am sorry I ever let her make me do the job on the rich guy, and I want to reform and want sister to reform too and come back home wid me as soon as I can get money to take us home. That's why I came here."

"Phyllis readily connected the story with the farewell party at Leslie's and the costume Earl had worn. She did not believe

Bill's version of the part he played in the story, but she saw an opportunity to use him to further her plans to ruin Dorothy's chances of ever explaining matters to Earl. Her fertile mind worked quickly and she said, "I am glad you wish to be a better man and I wish to help you to do so, but you must leave Dorothy to me as I can help her better than you can, and I do not wish to bring hardships upon her. You may help me by writing her a nice letter telling her you have reformed and asking her to also reform and come home with you. I will talk to her and give her money to follow you. Now I will help you write the letter to her, then give you money to take you home and give you a new start in life."

Mary furnished the writing materials, Phyllis dictated the letter, gave Bill what ready cash she had and arranged to have Mary take him more in the morning, both swearing to keep the whole affair a secret between them.

Bill gone, Phyllis again cautioned Mary regarding silence, then went to her room with the letter that would end all possibilities of Dorothy ever figuring as a rival.

In the seclusion of her room, Phyllis gloatingly talked to herself, saying, "Well, my lady, you now hold the winning card. You are the only one who knows that Miss Dorothy received a registered letter this morning, and that she sneaked away just after dark with a suitcase and handbag. And, have we not a nice letter telling why she left?"

CHAPTER XIV.

SATAN REVOLTS

Dorothy's strange disappearance created a profound sensation, Earl felt it keenly, his mother while ashamed of the outcome of her good intentions (due to her shortsightedness), inwardly rejoiced, thinking her son's affection would be destroyed by Dorothy's act.

In the quietude of her room she said to him. "My dear boy, I regret very much this affair, not only from shame at her action, but because I feel that you have become greatly attached to a person so unworthy of you. Phyllis was right, as we now know, and I know she loves you dearly. It will please me very much if you will be kinder to her for she has been very unhappy."

Earl thought of the time Dorothy had told him of her desire to run away, but he could not now understand why she had done so, without at least telling him of her intentions. To his mother, he said, "Well Mater, it does look bad for the girl and

you must think her very ungrateful, but I believe we will some day know the reason to be a good one. I will do as you wish, and try to make amends to Phyllis."

Dorothy's room had been left as when she went away, and Earl in passing it was seized with a desire to enter. The door was open, a faint odor of her favorite perfume came to him, clinging little memories of her sweet ways possessed him and he entered. Then came a desire to find some little article that she might have left behind, something to take back when he returned to duty "over there." He stepped to the dressing table, looked in the mirror that had so often reflected the features of the one he so dearly loved, and was startled by the reflection of a face dimly seen, then vanished. "A mere fancy," he thought. Thinking some little article that had belonged to Dorothy might have been left in the drawer, he drew it open. In it was a letter, opened. Taking it from the envelope he slowly read the contents, his senses numbed, a smothering sensation seized his throat as he realized future happiness was blighted by the knowledge the letter contained.

He put it in his pocket, went to his room and re-read the words:—

"To my wayward Sister:

"You will be surprised to know I have reformed and intend to 'go straight.'

"I have come here to ask you to reform with me and come back home.

"Ever since the night we played the 'begging game' on the gentleman at the masked ball, I have felt sorry. I have learned that you worked Tom Blake to get you in with the masked fellow's mother so you could catch her son. It was a clever piece of work but you should give it up and with me try to lead a better life. I have enough money to take us back home, and will meet you at the C.P.R. tonight."

"BILL."

Like a flash the scene of the night of the ball came to Earl's mind and he realized what his sub-conscious self had been groping for when he looked into Dorothy's eyes as she lay in the hammock the day he arrived in Vancouver. They were the eyes that had peered at him from beneath the peak of an old tweed cap, and the girlish voice was that of Dorothy.

* * * * *

The Carlisle home ceased to be the scene of happiness, a gloom settled on the place, the friends of the household sensed the trouble and stayed away from it.

Earl would soon return to duty, Mrs. Leslie decided to return to their home when he started on his trip, Phyllis to accompany them.

Phyllis was acting the part of the comforting angel, redoubling her efforts to fawn her way into his affections. Earl was extremely susceptible to sympathies and by the time they were nearly ready to leave she had almost succeeded in winning him. Success seemed about to crown her efforts, the evil spirit that had seemingly espoused her cause, deserted her, no doubt for the reason she had surpassed his greatest expectations, for he turned against her and caused her to ruin, with her own hands, all her plans.

* * * * *

There was but one day more to wait, then the journey eastward. Mrs. Leslie and Phyllis were to call that evening to say goodbye to a few intimate friends, Earl pleading a headache, and to remain home.

Before starting out to make the calls, Phyllis saw Earl cushioned in a morris chair, drew the smoking cabinet to his side, brought him the "Province," and a book from the library. "There, Sir," said Phyllis, smiling down at him, "rest, read and smoke until your happy attendant returns for further orders."

"You are very kind to me, Phyllis," said Earl, "and I fear I am undeserving of it, for I feel that my appreciation of your good qualities has been so feeble that you must have felt hurt. You must forgive, Phyllis, and in the future I will make amends."

The rush of blood to her cheeks betrayed her emotion as she replied, "Dear Earl, I have but tried to follow the dictates of my heart, which has never changed since our school days. We were sweethearts then, children I know, but I have never changed although you seemed to want the love of another. I gave up to her the place I longed for in your heart, for I thought you would be happy although I felt certain she was not worthy of you."

Mrs. Leslie called to her, preventing further conversation, Phyllis becoming secretly vexed at Mrs. Carlisle for spoiling an opportunity she had been waiting for, but she smiled, then impulsively kissed Earl's forehead and ran from the room, happy in the thought that the time for complete victory was near at hand.

Earl sat where she had left him, his mind in a state of bewilderment. Phyllis had ever been a puzzle to him, even in their school day infatuations when they had planned to marry when they "grew up." His mother had looked forward to their families being united, he owed much to her, Dorothy had proved to be a clever imposter, his duty was now quite plain. He would talk it over with his mother and Phyllis on their way home.

Having made his decision, Earl felt easier of mind, lit a cigarette, picked up the "Province," and read the important news items of the day, then took up the book Phyllis had brought from the library, settled back in the Morris chair to enjoy the story, "The Silver Horde," by Rex Beach. An envelope fell from the book into his lap. One word was scrawled on the envelope, like an accusing spirit to shame him for his readiness to forget Dorothy and make peace with Phyllis. The word was "Dorothy."

Earl was undecided what to do. The envelope was sealed, its smooth and unruffled condition showed that it had never been opened. Feeling that conventionalities were of no account in the case in hand, he opened the envelope and took out the letter enclosed. An expression of surprise came to his face as he read, he suddenly sprang to his feet, the newspaper was dashed across the room, the book tumbled to the floor, he looked at his watch and rushed to the telephone. The "wires" were kept hot until there was a berth reserved in the "Standard Sleeper," of No. 2, a taxi and baggage transfer truck ordered and with military precision all arrangements made for a very much excited and very happy man to leave for Montreal that night. His crisp letter to her causing Mrs. Leslie to remain in Vancouver.

CHAPTER XV.

"EVER FAIR KILLARNEY"

"Katie O'Shaughnessy Murphy," said that good woman to the reflection in the old mirror. "'Tis Saturday night, and so bein' the morrow is Sunday, and the divil lay hauld of ye if 'tis not at Mass ye are in the mornin'.

"Thin there's Dorothy to be sayin' prayers for, an may she be of forgivin ye for not goin' to see the wee brother, as ye said ye would.

"Thin there's the poor and nady that has no place to lay their heads, nor food to kape thim from starvin'. Worra, worra, 'tis hoigh time ye went to Mass and Confession, ye auld omad-haun, and may the good Lord be forgivin ye of y're sins."

It had been a week of hard work for Katie, and it was then midnight at the end of that week. The youngsters had received their weekly scrubbing in the tub, a ceremony religiously adhered to, as were the nightly prayers. She was, or should have been tired out, but if she were, a heart full of courage and true sense of duty ignored the fact. Her work and her principles left no time for idleness or gossip, the old mirror furnishing her, after Mrs. Brown's death, the only companion to whom should could confide when heart o'er flowed or new resolves were made.

Threads of silver here and there were creeping into the auburn of Katie's viz-a-viz in the mirror, and a few wrinkles faintly lined the rosy complexion that required no trickery of chemistry to make it healthy, therefore beautiful. She unconsciously gave it the one and only treatment to make complexions enjoy the natural beauty that is theirs by the laws of the Maker, work for that which makes it worth while, for the future of her children and as far as possible for her fellow beings, the attention to home that makes it desirable to its occupants, all these fortified against change by the controlling power of a soul too full of faith to allow causes for camouflaging within the portals.

Katie did not see Youth in the viz-a-viz of the old mirror, nor yet Age. The eyes that glittered at her held the clear whiteness of the foam of the sea that sent her, a child, scampering back from the insweep of its waves washing the shores of her native land. The blue of the sky she had never seen duplicated after she left her childhood home. Combined with the white and blue were pupils that made the whole a mirror into which they who looked saw that which made them think of things they had loved because they were good. Only a "washerwoman" we will admit, overlooked by writers of poetry and prose who go far and write chapters of less than Katie O'Shaughnessy! Murphy, a true woman, God bless her.

She knew naught of theatres or operas, but on that Saturday night, tired without knowing it, Katie sang a song of "Ever Fair Killarney" from a heart that pleased the King of Critics and His verdict was worth a Crown.

Up early next morning, Katie was off to Mass and Confession, then home to prepare breakfast for the youngsters who were left in charge of little Katie while Mrs. Murphy went to see Bobbie.

She found Bobbie well, but lonely, he wanted Dorothy and "The Commanding Officer." He told her all about his new idol and the wonderful things they were to do to the Huns when they went to war together.

All the toys in the nursery had to be inspected, particularly the miniature sword and gun presented to Private Smif by the C. O.

Then came "drill" as taught by the Sergeant Major, Bobbie's skill a surprise to Katie as she sat on the nursery lounge and smiled her appreciation.

The exercises concluded, she took Bobbie on her lap and kissed his rosy cheeks and, as usual, she was thinking of others, and said, "'Tis Dorothy that would be seen' ye this day, and the dear mither, pace be unto her ashes. How proud the poor soul wud be of her bye this minit." There was a pause, then she said, "Sure, and how is Dorothy?"

"Doty's well," replied Bobbie, "an shes wroted that Mr. Blake ith comin' here today to thee Bobbie."

Katie's face took on a surprised expression as she said in an undertone, "Mr. Blake. Did ye say Blake?"

"Yeth," replied Bobbie, "ats Tom."

"Tom? Tom?" Katie questioned herself rather than Bobbie, "is the blind gentlemine, Mr. Blake?"

"Yeth," Bobbie replied.

There was silence as the eyes that combined white, blue and something that makes one think of things they have loved because they are good, were looking far across the emerald sea to a cove on its shore. She saw a barefooted boy and girl playing on the sands. Hand in hand they chased the receding waves and in turn were chased by them. Again they were youth and maid seated on the rocks learning to sing their favorite song, "Killarney."

Now the sun beat upon the emerald sea and the white sands, the glare of its rays hurt the eyes of the boy, so the girl took him by the hand and led him to the little cabin near her own on top of the bluffs.

Again she is knocking at the little cabin door to ask the boy to come out and play, but the boy had gone away, no one knew where or ever again saw or heard of him. She ran to the sands to weep, the old women of the bluffs were wailing his loss, for he must have fallen into the sea and drowned.

Poor Katie lived it all again, there in the quietude of the nursery while a little boy and the toys knew naught of that which filled her heart. She closed her eyes and hugged Bobbie to her breast, and a voice of other days filled her throat as she sang of lakes and fells, of "Ever Fair Killarney."

The song was heard by one whose memory carried him back to the sands of the little cove on the shore of the emerald sea.

The governess led him through the hall leading to the nursery, his heart o'erflowed, as his voice joined that of Katie.

The governess sensed the sweet tragedy of the scene, she led Bobbie away and left Tom standing in front of Katie, their voices blending in the song of "Ever Fair Killarney."

Again they were on the sands of the little cove, youth and maid, their hearts filled with newborn love. Then the glare of the sun on the emerald sea and the white sands so hurt his eyes that his hand was gropingly outstretched for the one to guide him to the little cabin on the bluffs. He felt its warm clasp that filled his soul with peace as Katie seated him on the nursery lounge. A pair of loving arms encircled his neck, loving lips brushed his forehead and tears of joy streamed down Katie's cheeks as she sobbed, "Tom, my Tom, praises be to God, praises to Him that gives back to his colleen, y're blessed self. Oh, Tom, Tom, tell me y'll niver agin be lavin me."

The old mirror was not there to accuse her of being "an auld goose," as the love of other days surged through her heart and Tom Blake and Katie O'Shaughnessy Murphy folded each to the others breast and lived the glorious joy of reunion.

CHAPTER XVI.

"ORDERS IS ORDERS"

"The friend in need" had not failed Dorothy. "By return" the mails had brought her a money order and a letter stating, "Come back home, colleen," and a "God bless ye till y're safe in the home of y're thru friend Katie."

She arrived at the station she had left with fond dreams, that all too soon had proved untrue, and hurried along the streets, shaping her course to pass Tom's corner to tell him of her return and the reason for it. Arriving at the corner she was surprised to find it vacant. Her enquiries informed her that he had not been seen for several weeks.

Anxiety filling her mind, she hastened to the home of Katie and there received her second surprise, for a sign in the window proclaimed the fact that the place was to let.

Realizing that she had made a mistake by not wiring Katie the time of her arrival, Dorothy went to a nearby store and there learned that Katie had moved to Elmdale. Taking a street car she alighted at the corner of a street centrally located in Elmdale, and from enquiries at a small store learned that Katie lived "at the other end of the block, in the little bungalow next to the vacant corner."

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As she approached the bungalow the sound of singing came to her ears. Pausing in amazement she detected Katie's soprano but mingling with it was a deep baritone new to her. Katie saw her as she came up the verandah steps, a shout of delight abruptly ended the singing and Dorothy was enveloped in a bearlike hug and she was smothered in the vigor of Katie's welcome.

Released from the bearlike hug, Dorothy's eyes opened wide with amazement as she saw Tom standing in the doorway. Running to him she threw her arms about his neck and kissed his cheeks, saying, "Oh, friend Tom, what does it all mean?"

Seated in the cozy living room of the bungalow, explanations were made, and as Katie put it, "So, Tom and Katie wuz married, an niver agin will he be standin' on a kornor wid a shelf sthrapped til his nick like a monk in the zoo."

"Right you are, Colleen," laughed Tom, "but the monk and the strap and tray, thanks to their kind hearted friends, made the money that will keep us all from harm, and when the little store is finished on the corner next to us, we can sit back and see a future grow for the youngsters."

"Oh, Tom," said Dorothy, "Do you remember the day I said you should marry Mrs. Murphy because you both were so good, ever thinking of others, never remembering yourselves?"

"Hush! Colleen," said Katie, "'tis a secret we knew, and a thrue sacrit 'tis be the token that we have been cared for and made happy be the One that loves thim as loves others better nor thimsilves." She paused a moment, then continued, unconsciously following the principles she had so lightly spoken of, for she said, "Now thin, the spalpeens of youngsters will be comin' home and the little devils will be hungry, so Tom, y'll be after entertainin' her ladyship while Katie put on the korn bafe and cabbage."

* * * * *

On the long journey across the Continent Earl fumed and fretted, and time dragged with leaden feet, but No. 2 rolled into the home station "on time."

As he was passing through the station to take a taxi for home Earl noticed a group of people around a station constable who held a familar looking form in his arms. Approaching the group he heard the Constable say, "Does anyone here own this little boy, he claims he is going to Vancouver to find his 'Commanding Ossifer,' whoever that may be."

Earl recognized the anxious little face of "Private Smif" and elbowing his way to the side of the constable he said, "I do not own the boy, but I know where he belongs and will take him home."

Bobbie gave a squeal of delight as he recognized the "Commanding Ossifer" and said, "There he ith, he'th my 'Commanding Ossifer'!"

Calling a taxi, Earl and Bobbie were soon at the Leslie home, Earl much surprised at the news given him by the governess, which was to the effect that Bobbie had been taken away by Dorothy, who refused to tell where they were going.

Laying the very tired Private Smif on the nursery lounge, Earl smiled as sleep quickly claimed the infant warrior. "It is a mean thing to do," thought Earl, "but this little soldier will be held for ransom. Dorothy will miss him and her first thought will be that he has found his way here, and will come after him. Then, well, we will wait and see what happens." A broad smile came to Earl's lips as he thought of a plan to make the meeting with Dorothy an impressive one, one that would recall their first meeting.

Taking the governess into his confidence, he prepared for the expected arrival of Dorothy.

* * * * *

Dorothy came as expected, Earl heard her tell of Bobbie running away, and ask if he were there, the governess carrying out her instructions by telling Dorothy to "go right up to the nursery, he is alone playing with his old friends, the toys."

Private "Smif" had also received "orders" and impressed with the fact that "orders is orders." From his hiding place back of the curtains of the double windows, Earl heard Dorothy ascend the stairs and enter the nursery, heard Bobbie run to meet her, and her words, "Oh, brother-man, why did you run away from poor sister Dorothy?"

"Cause me wanted my 'Commanding Ossifer,'" replied Private Smif.

"Brother-man was naughty," said Dorothy, "and the Commanding Officer is far, far away, and we must never see him again."

Earl noticed the plaintive note in her voice and felt like rushing to her to contradict the statement she had made, but Bobby's next words held him back.

"Ain't far away, shall see him again."

"Yes he is, brother-man, and you must not contradict sister."

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"Ain't!"

"He is. Why do you insist on contradicting sister?"

"Wont' tell!"

"Bobbie!"

"Well, 'orders' not to, an 'orders is orders'."

"Orders not, orders, who gave you the orders, brother-man?"

"Commanding Ossifer," shouted Private Smif, as he carried out "further orders" by rushing out of the nursery, slamming the door shut after him.

Dorothy vaguely sensed the strangeness that lurked in the air, her suspicions took more concrete form as the curtains of the window were swept aside and "The Masked Chevalier" stood before her.

Her heart gave a great bound, halted, then beat a fierce tattoo against its confines.

Earl saw her agitation and said, "Don't be afraid little girl, the Prince has come to make you happy so you will stop crying."

The white of her drawn features flushed to crimson and as quickly back to a deathly white as her heart sucked in the life current with a violent throb. Earl caught her swaying form and carried her to the nursery lounge. He tore away the mask of the chevalier, folded her limp form to his breast and fervently kissed the quivering lips until returning strength enabled her to struggle to a sitting posture as she pushed him away from her.

"Oh, why have you come back, why have you done this when you are engaged to Phyllis? You had no right to kiss me. Go back to her. She is rich and a lady. You now know Your mother and Phyllis must also know it. What can such as I be to you, a real Prince in comparison with poor me. Please go away and let Bobbie and I leave you to your happiness." Her voice wavered piteously as she concluded the impassioned words, she bowed her head, tears falling from her wet eyelids.

Then Earl, the "unromantic" soldier met his Waterloo, and Earl the bighearted man, natural son of plain "Jim" Leslie, broke down and in his manly naturalness mingled honest tears with those of "the beggar at the gate."

She had not struggled this time, but lay in his arms as would a tired child that had found rest from the fatigue of play. The intensity of their emotions gradually diminished and Earl said, "What can you be to me? Everything and all that a true hearted little woman can be to the man who loves her more than all else in the world. I know that you do not understand, but you and I have been cruelly deceived by those who planned to separate us. I never was engaged to Phyllis, she lied to you. I

confess that after you ran away they succeeded in deceiving me or I would have followed you immediately. Mere chance placed a letter in my hands that told the truth, and I hastened to you, to ask you to love me and become my wife."

Dorothy's heart filled with the greatest joy a woman who truly loves can know. She looked into his eyes and knew that a clean and white soul lay beyond them. Her arms reached up and encircled his neck as through tears of happiness she said, "I do not quite understand, but I do love you, have loved you from the time I knew you as 'A page from a fairy tale,' and I shall love you, dear Prince, forever."

The nursery became a bower of love to the two. All the mystery of the past was cleared from their minds, Bill's letter, that had been placed in the dressing-table drawer by Phyllis was read, then the one that fell from the book, and which gave the lie to Phyllis' dictation to Bill, it read:—

"Miss Goody-Goody":

"I saw you in the 'Buzzwagon' at Murphy's. Yer a swell kid ain't yer. If you don't help me lift some coin from yer swell friends I'll tell them that ye waz the kid 'that was beggin' and that ye waz in on a "frameup" wid me to get the roll from de guy wid a fether in his lid. Ye have always bin to much of a goody-goody anyhow, now get busy or I'll spoil yer game.

"I'll hang around the C.P.R. station nights, meet me there."

"BILL."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GOLDEN RULE

Mrs. Leslie reviewed a letter from Earl, enclosing the copies of Bill's contradictory ones, and telling her to ask Phyllis why she had been watching at the window of Dorothy's room when he took the letter from the dressing-table. "Tell her I now know, although I thought then that she passed the window by chance."

The letter concluded with, "I know your heart is right, Mater mine, and that you will love Dorothy when you know her better. I am going back to duty 'over there' and when I return it will be to 'a plain little wife in a plain little home, devoid of shams and conventions, a true 'Home, Sweet Home.'"

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When the war was over Earl came back to "Home, Sweet Home," in a little bungalow just around the corner from that of Tom and Katie. On the corner is a store, its proprietor used to stand on a corner with a tray of smallwares strapped around his neck. You may hear him evenings, singing with Katie to lull to sleep the blue eyed son of their neighbors, Earl and Dorothy, who are looking on and listening to "Killarney," the light of a Holy Love in their eyes.

And the warmth of human kindness prevails in that whole district. For, "On the corner is a little store displaying a peculiar sign, its insignia emblematical of the spirit prevailing in that small section owing to the example set by the true men and women of our story. The motto of the sign is their guide and is

"THE GOLDEN RULE."

