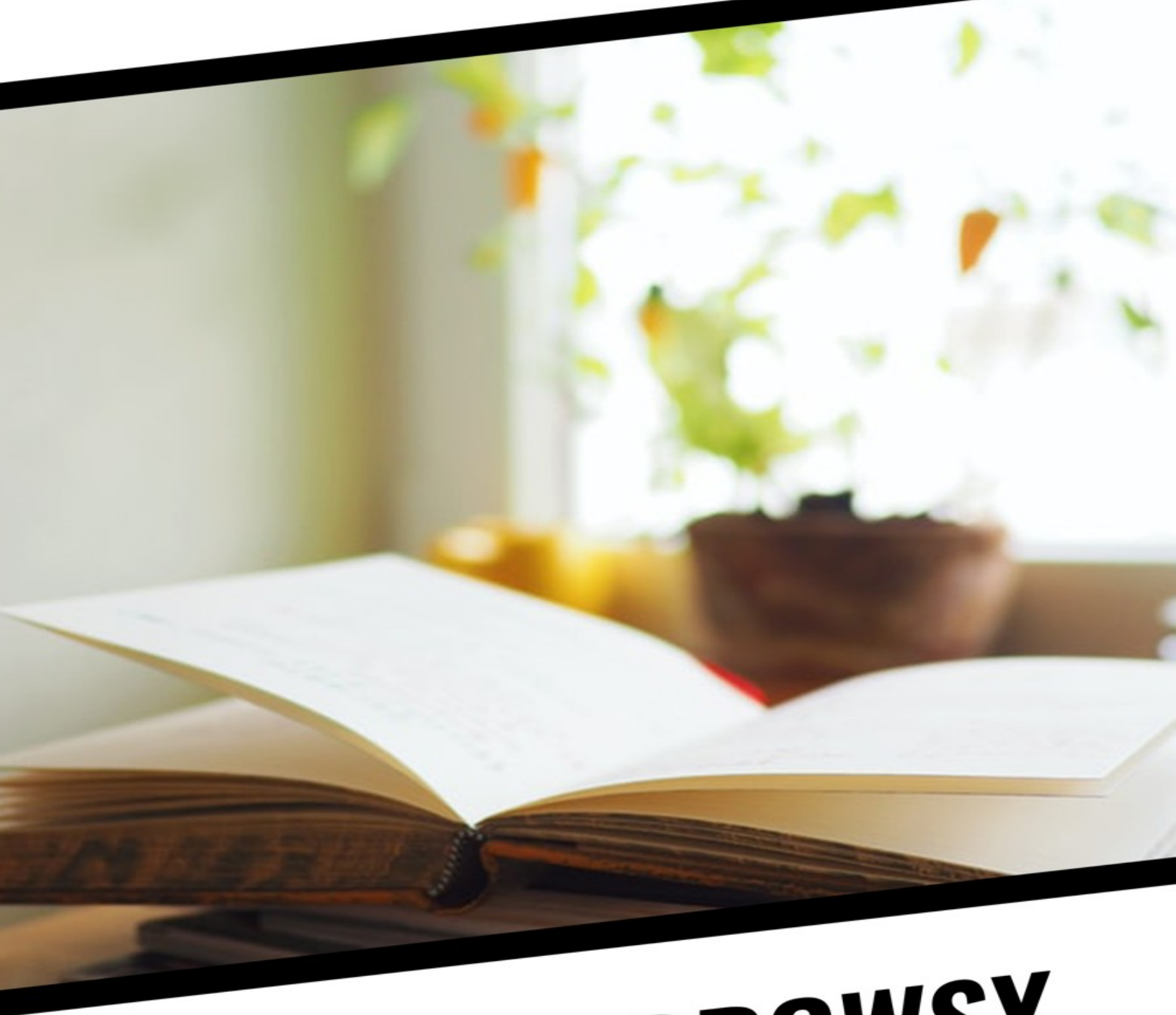




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**JOHN AMES MITCHELL**



**DROWSY**

**John Ames Mitchell**

# **Drowsy**

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DROWSY

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## I THEIR OWN AFFAIR

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Breath of Scandal.

Imperishable zephyr! Dispenser of delight to all:—save those it touches. Floating in playful sport around the globe, it does little harm to callous sinners. But it blights, with a special and vociferous joy, superior persons.

The higher and more immaculate the victim the greater the general mirth. In the wake of pleasure it may have, at times, a comic side; at other times it kills—and with agonies that are not for publication.

In a certain month of May it loitered up the eastern shore of the Adriatic, lingering briefly at Rovigno, just long enough to nip the budding romance of an interesting widow. At Orsera it electrified the leading citizens by linking, in a gentle whisper, the name of a lady of spotless reputation with a Platonic Friend. It spared Parenzo. But at Cittanuova it fanned into flame a general curiosity regarding the relations of a Captain of Cavalry with the wife of a certain careless husband. At S. Lorenzo it merely put two lovers on their guard.

Then onward for Trieste. In this search for savory victims it overlooked a villa high up a hillside. Here, indeed, the

Breath of Scandal might have entered and rejoiced! But the villa, as if guarding against this very visitor, had drawn before its face a screen of trees and vines and flowers. As wise old Bumble takes his morning nectar from the choicest flowers, so here might this fateful zephyr have drunk his fill.

There was mystery about this villa.

Natives, whose business brought them in the vicinity, were enchanted by the beauty of a woman's voice. In melody and in power it was, to them, a revelation. Two middle-aged gentlemen—one of them the Curé of S. Pietro in Selve—both lovers of music and who attended operas at Milan and other cities heard the celestial voice one day when passing near the villa. They were charmed. Both knew it was no ordinary singer. But the singer's identity was not discovered.

On this particular morning a young man was sitting alone in the Loggia of the villa. Westward, through one of the open arches, he gazed upon the deep, blue waters of the Adriatic, far down below. Small boats, with sails of various colors, floated here and there, like lazy butterflies. The man was reclining in an easy chair like an invalid—which he was. Bandages encased his throat. A bullet through his neck, two months ago, would explain these bandages. It was the price he paid for striking an Austrian officer across the mouth. The Austrian officer had made an offensive remark concerning the Diva. The young American was a good shot and in the duel, three days later, he sent a bullet through his adversary's chest. It so happened that the Austrian, being also a good shot, sent a corresponding missile through the young American's neck. Then the Diva and her defender

had fled to this villa; not together, but separately, to escape the Breath of Scandal. Here, in this ideal nest, they found peace and privacy. Not under their own names. Ah, no! If the lady's identity were suspected the thrilling news would have circled the globe. One cannot be an opera singer of world-wide fame and suddenly become obscure. The Diva's Italian friends and the public believed that she was rusticating somewhere, with relatives. The American's friends in Paris had heard about the duel, but knew nothing of his whereabouts. So, alone and happy, here on this Istrian hillside, they laughed at Mrs. Grundy, and lived and loved at leisure. And what sweeter victory than looking down from a perch of safety upon the world below where the Breath of Scandal spared neither the guilty nor the innocent? Kind providence had so managed that the Diva's immediate family was not inquisitive. It consisted solely of her father, a famous scientist, whose portrait, with its high forehead, shaggy hair and drowsy eyes was a familiar face to Italian students. So absorbed he was in study and experiment that the adventures of his yet more famous daughter caused him no uneasiness. Had the Breath of Scandal entered his laboratory, it would have been ignored—or ejected as a liar. The Diva's husband—known as "The Calamity" by her friends—a handsome gentleman of noble family, had long since become immune to the Breath of Scandal—so well encased in his disrepute that he could sink no further. He and the Breath of Scandal were boon companions. At present he held a government position in Siam. Three years he had been there, and might remain for ten years more.



So, at the cozy Istrian villa were no jealous eyes to disturb a lover's dream.

On this May morning, too warm, perhaps, in the sunshine, but perfect in the shade, the American, in his reclining chair, was listening to a singing voice. It came to him from an inner room of the villa. Dreamily he listened, with half closed eyes, and smiling mouth. It had been rather a handsome face before the duel. Now the features were too sharp, and the eyes showed lack of sleep. This old Hungarian song—a mother's prayer, now coming from the Diva's lips, and heart—was her lover's favorite, and her own. It was given with the depth of feeling and the art of a great singer, herself soon to be a mother. There are things in music, often the simplest songs, that stir the imagination and reach the secret chamber of the soul beyond all others. This Hungarian prayer was one. It had become, to these two people, a hymn of hope, with its love and fears, its yearnings and its joy. And into it the Diva gave her very soul.

The song ended. Then, with eyes still moist, the Diva walked out into the loggia.

A pleasant thing to look upon, this goddess of the ravishing voice. There seemed bewitchment in her figure, in her carriage, in her head and neck, in the low, wide brow with its blackest of black hair. Beneath the heavy lashes of the midnight eyes lurked tragedy. Their mysterious depths disturbed the hearts of men. Yet her lips told more of mirth. Certain critics maintained that her greatest triumphs were in comedy. But as nearly all grand opera is for tragedy she rarely appeared in lighter rôles. This morning, as she

stepped out into the loggia, she could have passed for almost any heroine—either of tragedy or comedy. Her robe, a thing of light material, might be any shade or color; perhaps a delicate purple ground with a smiling yellow pattern—or vice versa; so artfully designed that the outlines of her figure became elusive.

She bent over, kissed the invalid, and pressed a cheek against his face. Then she straightened up and stood beside him, looking down with a smile that was more than friendly. The invalid returned the smile. It was an easy thing to do. For what is easier than returning the smile of a singing goddess vainly sought by other men, when she descends from pinnacles of glory—and freely, joyfully surrenders herself, and all from an overpowering love? In the smile that lingered between them were things whose utterance is not in words of any language:—things that true lovers, and they alone, can ever know. Close beside him she drew a wicker chair, and she sat in silence for a moment, studying his face. Earnestly she looked into his eyes as if searching his secret thoughts.

Flowers may be the language of love, but in this case it was also French. The Diva was Italian and her French was more than good. And Dr. Alton's French, for an American, was not so very bad. But since the leaden messenger had entered his neck three months ago, he had spoken no word, of French, nor of any other language. It was still a question whether he would regain his voice or be forever mute. And in those three months of ceaseless devotion there had come to the Diva an amazing gift. So intense had been her desire to know his thoughts, so persistent her efforts to know what

his silent lips would utter, that at last the wish was granted. A mysterious power had come: a power that transferred to her own brain—or soul—the thoughts his lips could not express.

The conversation to an eavesdropper would have seemed a monologue by the lady, with long pauses. In these pauses she was reading her lover's thoughts. The young man's pleasure in these gazings was even greater than the Diva's. Within her eyes, themselves an entrancement, he found love and infinite devotion. Under their spell he asked no greater joy than opening wide the secret chambers of his soul.

"Did the little blond hero happen to notice how I finished the prayer song this morning?"

The little blond hero—who was some inches taller than the Diva when on his feet—nodded. He nodded slowly and carefully in consideration of the bandaged throat.

"And that it was a little different from the way I usually sing it?"

Again the answer was a careful nod.

"How did he like it? Is it better that way?"

This time, after the faint, affirmative sign, she gazed longer into the adoring eyes, waiting a less simple answer. She found it, and with no aid from his lips.

"Yes, that was my idea precisely. More strength in the final passages; the deeper feeling of a mother's appeal." Then, with closed eyes and clasped hands: "May the prayer be answered, for my whole soul is in it!"

On the clasped hands the invalid laid one of his own, with a gentle pressure, telling of sympathy, hope and confidence.

She opened her eyes and returned his smile. "Yes, yes. We must be cheerful; always cheerful and full of hope. It will be better for the child."

After a silence, in which both looked thoughtfully over the tree tops, toward the distant coast of Italy, beyond the butterfly sails far below moving here and there on the shimmering surface of the Adriatic, she turned, in response to another pressure of the hand, and again looked deep into the patient's eyes.

"No, Dr. Cervini says there's no harm in my singing unless I fatigue myself. And I never do that."

But his face was anxious. So with an air of cheerful confidence she exclaimed:

"I have decided on a boy. Yes, a boy! Smile again. I love to see you smile. Why a boy? Because boys are stronger and bigger than girls; more reasoning; more honest. What? Not so lovable as girls. Oh, nonsense!"

Here a pause.

"I don't quite understand. Think that again.—Oh, well I shouldn't mind if he was. I love bad boys. Of course we don't want a cowardly, mean-spirited, stingy, cold-blooded, deceitful kind of badness."

Here, after another pause, she laughed. "Yes, I suppose that is just what I do mean—a bad boy who is good."

Another silence, and another laugh. "No, never!" "But tell me, Defender of Women, why do you wish for a girl? Because what? She might be a perfect copy of myself? Oh, honey-mouthed humbug!"

She rose, stooped over, kissed him, and sat down again.

"Well, I shall be happy, very happy, whatever the Bon Dieu gives us."

The next silence was longer.

"Yes, that is all very true. Heredity counts. There's no doubt of that. Half Italian, half American—there are worse combinations. But I am doubtful about the American half." Here she frowned and slowly shook her head. "I have a torturing suspicion that all Americans—with one heavenly exception—are ignoble things."

The blond hero smiled and closed his eyes.

"Not an opera singer in the whole country," she went on. "No music, no art, no Roman ruins; just a race of handsome, reckless, blood-thirsty young doctors. And the whole miserable wilderness, the whole continent itself, was discovered by an Italian! Think of that! Think of how much we owe Columbus, you and I! Were it not for him we should never have met—for you would not exist. You owe everything to Italy. Still, we love each other just as much. That is the important thing. Nothing else really matters." But she frowned and shook a finger. "Nevertheless, if it's a boy I shall name him Columbus Michael Angelo Dante Victor Emanuel Alton, just to hide the dishonor of his father's nationality."

The invalid clasped the finger, and held it. For a moment two pairs of eyes looked deep into each other. Then the Diva laughed. "What ideas you have! The Good God gave you a sunny heart, my beloved. And you know—Oh, you know well—that whatever——"

At the sound of a distant door bell she stopped abruptly. Into her face came a look of mild alarm. Both knew that no

visitor was welcome. Who could enter this bower unless shadowed by the Breath of Scandal? The next moment, however, her face brightened. "Oh—of course! It's the good Dr. Cervini. I had forgotten he was to come early to-day."

The man who entered kissed the tips of the Diva's fingers. Then he shook hands with the American.

Tall, thin, of brown and leathery skin, with a prominent Roman nose, fierce mustaches and pointed iron gray beard, he could easily have passed for Don Quixote. But the fierce mustaches failed to hide the lines of mirth about the mouth. And from two calm eyes beneath the threatening eyebrows gleamed sympathy and benevolence. It was generally believed that Dr. Cervini had ushered into the world more princes and princesses, more grand dukes and duchesses, more future kings and queens than any man in Europe. In those cases where there might be a question as to the propriety of the little one's arrival, he was more than trustworthy. In such affairs the Silence of the Tomb, compared with Dr. Cervini, was noisy gossip.

After various questions concerning the patient's progress he exclaimed:

"What patience, what godlike self-control are exhibited by Dr. Alton! Younger and more up-to-date than I, with a perfect knowledge of the human throat, yet he submits to my advice and antiquated treatment! Medals should be his!"

Dr. Alton, of course, protested, in silence, and the silent protest was put in words by the Diva. So ran the conversation for a time, Dr. Cervini watching the Diva with deepest interest.

"Do you realize, Signora," he said at last, "that you have developed a most extraordinary faculty?"

"Is it so very remarkable?"

"It is, indeed! In all my experience, and you know it covers many years, I have seen nothing quite like it. Hypnotism, mental telepathy and the old familiar tricks are very different matters. In your case a sound mind in a sound body merges itself in closest communication with another mind, equally sound and normal. I am wondering if you could still read the doctor's thoughts if there was no common language between you. Or is it his unspoken words that you read?"

The Diva reflected. "No, it is not his words. I feel sure I should know his wishes even if there were no such things as words." Then, turning to her lover: "Tell me, wicked one, do you have to think in words when we talk together?—No, he says not."

"An amazing faculty!" murmured Dr. Cervini. "I have never seen nor heard of such a case. You two, as I understand, can carry on an endless conversation, and without a word from him."

"Yes, except, sometimes, names of people or of places. Then, if I don't know them, he writes them for me."

"Could you read the thoughts of another person, do you think? Of others, beside our invalid, here?"

"Oh, I am sure I don't know! I never tried. It's a terrible thought. Could anything be more frightful than to know, at times, what people really thought of you? No, no, Heaven forbid!"

Dr. Cervini laughed. "Oh, you would have little to fear on that score!" Then, tapping the hand of the invalid, "But you and I, Doctor, we professional sinners!—well—that would indeed be humiliating! Our crosses would be heavy!"

The invalid smiled, then looked at the Diva. And the Diva laughed, blushed and shook her head.

"What does he say?"

"It's too foolish to repeat. He's a silly boy."

"I insist upon knowing."

"He says——. No, no. I couldn't repeat it! His brain is affected. His blond wits are wandering."

Dr. Cervini frowned and looked his fiercest. "What manners! Secret messages in the very presence of a guest!"

"Well—he says the unspoken thoughts of a grateful world might intoxicate me, and he doesn't enjoy drunkards."

Dr. Cervini laughed. "No, you are mistaken, Doctor. She has already survived that test. No living conqueror has sailed in triumph on such seas of glory. No other queen or goddess has achieved her victory without losing something of the simplicity, the freshness and the charm of youth. The hearts of men are hers. To entrance the world, to——"

"Stop! Stop!" Again the color came to her cheeks. "If you said it too often, I might believe it, and then—adieu to all simplicity."

The two men protested—each in his own manner—against all denials of their sincerity.

More serious conversation followed. Dr. Cervini, after final instructions for the patient, departed, the Diva going with him to the outer door. As usual at these partings, she



pressed him for an honest opinion of the patient's condition. And, as usual, it was favorable.

She laid a hand on his arm. "You are telling me the truth, aren't you, old friend?"

"Yes. On my honor. In a fortnight he shall eat and drink and talk in comfort. Believe me. Now, now! No tears! I know what a strain it is. You have been simply magnificent all through these weary weeks. Don't weaken now. The worst is over."

"Yes, I will be brave. But the hardest of all is to see him suffer. He never complains. He tries so hard, so hard, to be cheerful! It seems, at moments, as if I could bear it no longer."

"Go away for a week or two. I can bring an excellent nurse."

"No, no! Never that!"

"Then remember the child. It must not come into the world with the face of a tragic mask; with weeping eyes and wrinkled brow."

She smiled and promised. But, after bidding him a cheerful good-by, and when the door had closed, she dropped into a chair and pressed both hands against her face. It was a determined effort to keep back the tears. They came, however; but the luxury was brief. With an air of somewhat fierce resolve she arose, stood just long enough before a mirror to dry her eyes, then, humming the gayest of airs from a comic opera, she went out into the loggia and rejoined the sufferer.

Meanwhile, Dr. Cervini descended the driveway of the villa to the postroad. There he stopped, leaned upon the

parapet and looked down upon the scene below him; the little town at the foot of the hill, and the sky-blue Adriatic.

At the sound of an approaching carriage he turned. The approaching equipage was obviously patrician. It pertained to a lady of the High Nobility. Save the two men in livery on the box and the Breath of Scandal, this Countess was traveling alone. She and the Breath of Scandal were boon companions. This intimacy bore no resemblance to the corresponding intimacy among common people where purity is defiled, homes ruined and good names besmeared. With the Countess the Breath of Scandal became a sweet perfume—wafting around her person an intriguing atmosphere of mystery, romance and patrician vice.

Friendly greetings passed between the lady and the doctor. Then the lady asked for information. She suspected from something she had heard that the Diva was in this vicinity.

"Now, tell me, Doctor. Where is she?"

"She? In this vicinity?"

"Come now, I am not to be deceived. You may as well tell me at once. Where is she? You are one of her intimates and I saw you come down that avenue. As the only truthful man in Austria, you may as well confess that she lives at the end of it."

The truthful man raised his Mephistophelean eyebrows, smiled and slowly shook his head. "Alas, I wish, indeed, she were there! There is a villa, Countess, but no Diva in it."

The lady frowned. "Who then?"

"Nobody you know, or are likely to know. The occupant is a deservedly prosperous manufacturer of excellent

chocolate."

"Are you sure?" In her manner was suspicion, not quite allayed.

"Well—I have spent the last hour there—and many previous hours."

"Very likely. But I don't believe you."

"Am I a liar?"

"I really don't know."

"But you just said I was the only truthful man in Austria."

"Merely a form of speech. I meant relatively. You might be the most truthful man in Austria and yet have no standing in heaven—or any other honest resort."

Dr. Cervini smiled. "True, too true! But who told you our Diva was here about?"

"A connoisseur. A judge of voices. One who could not be mistaken. He heard her voice one evening, here, along this road."

"Was he sure it was the Diva?"

"Absolutely."

"Ah, now I understand. Delicious! Really, it's too good to keep to ourselves. If we could only interview him together, you and I!"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean my chocolate king has a young daughter, who sings. And she sings—yes—she sings well. But, vocally, she bears about the same resemblance to our Diva as a guinea chicken to a skylark."

"Could our connoisseur be quite such a fool as that?"

"A real connoisseur can be anything. But possibly he had dined too well on that particular night. However, even when

sober a musical critic can——" He stopped abruptly, with a gesture of annoyance. "Oh, what a memory! My humblest apologies to our connoisseur. He was right, absolutely right. He made no mistake."

"Then she is here, after all?"

"No, she is far from here. But I had entirely forgotten, for the moment, that she passed this way not so long ago. In the town below there, she lingered a day or two on her way to France."

"Is she in France?"

"Yes, for the summer;—and for rest."

"What part of France?"

"Ah, that, Countess, I must not tell."

"But I am one of her oldest friends! Am I not even to correspond with her?"

"Well, you know her one object in going there is for absolute rest, not even writing letters. I see you are hurt, dear lady, and I understand your feelings, but I am sworn to secrecy."

The lady stiffened, and settled back in the carriage. "Hurt! I should say so. And why not, pray?"

Dr. Cervini seemed to reflect a moment. "Well, Countess, will you give me your solemn word of honor to guard the secret if I tell you?"

"I promise."

"Do you happen to know the town of Tarbes?"

"No."

"Have you ever been to Foix?"

"Never heard of it."

"Well, she has rented a little villa somewhere between those places, but back in the mountains."

"What mountains?"

"The Pyrenees."

"God protect us! Is she there?"

"She is. Her doctors and her family all insisted upon her having a six months' rest. And she needs it."

"Provoking! Most annoying! And here I have had a long drive beneath a broiling sun—and all for nothing."

Dr. Cervini waved a solemn finger. "Don't forget your promise."

"Yes, I will remember. But, the young American doctor who struck—and then killed a captain. Where is he?"

"In his own country."

"In America?"

"Even so."

"Shameful! Shameful!"

"Why shameful, Countess?"

"Because I hoped they were together—as they should be. It's too delicious a romance for the lovers to spoil by parting."

"Lovers! She hardly knew him. If a favorite prima donna were to adopt every man who fell in love with her she would have no time for music. Heavens! What a regiment of followers!"

"Nevertheless," said the lady, in a more serious manner, "I blush for the Diva."

"Why blush?"

"I always blush for virtue."

---

As the carriage, with the Countess, escorted by the Breath of Scandal, disappeared around a curve in the road, Dr. Cervini removed his hat, looked heavenward and murmured:

"Angels of mercy, forgive a liar."

But the lie did well. Never again came the Breath of Scandal so near the Diva. The lovers' secret remained a secret. Even her father, the famous scientist with the drowsy eyes, died twenty years later not knowing that he had a grandchild.

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## II HOW THE ACQUAINTANCE BEGAN

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Seven years have passed.

Under the arching elms in a Massachusetts village, one Sunday morning in July, various persons were moving toward a house of worship. The house of worship was white, with a portico of Ionic columns.

Among the branches of the elms a noisy congregation of non-sectarian birds seemed to be laughing at the Orthodox bells.

Dr. Alton, leading his little son by the hand, was walking beside the parson. Dr. Alton was but little over thirty years of age. His son was nearly seven. When the older physician died, two months ago, this younger Dr. Alton, his only child, had returned from Europe and announced his intention of continuing his father's practice. Why an attractive young man, shining with honors from the medical schools of Paris and Vienna, should be willing to hide his talents in a village like Longfields was an interesting mystery. Some argued that the death of his young wife had broken his heart and killed ambition. But this morning, as he walked to church, beneath the singing elms, he took cheerful notice of the

things about him. He enjoyed the greetings of old friends of his boyhood.

Some yards behind, in this progress toward the church, came Mr. and Mrs. David Snell. Mr. Snell was listening to the discourse of his wife. He listened with the patience and the fortitude attained by long experience and by force of will. His beard was gray, his eyes were blue, his shoulders narrow and his figure slight. Also, he had a gentle voice and gentle manners. But it was known among his friends that this gentleness was by no means a manifestation of any inward weakness. While patient and much enduring, there were times when he became more determined, more "cantankerously sot" and unchangeable than the movements of the planets. Deacon Babbitt once said, "Compared with David when he gets his dander up the Rock of Ages is a weather-cock. The only safe thing to do is to stand from under and let him be." But these transformations were rare, and often forgotten.

"I don't care," Mrs. Snell was saying, "people have a right to gossip when a handsome young man comes home from Europe with a child like that and refuses to open his mouth about its mother. I don't believe it *had* a mother."

"P'r'aps not. P'r'aps it grew on a pumpkin tree and the doctor jest picked it."

"You know what I mean, David. We never heard of his being married durin' those six years he was over there—over there studyin' medicine. Studyin' medicine! I guess he studied a good many things besides medicine."

"Been a fool if he hadn't. Medicine ain't the only interestin' thing in this world."



"Don't be coarse, David, and excusing vice. You know very well he should not deceive people about it."

"How has he deceived anybody?"

"By saying he was married to this boy's mother—and she died."

"Well, ain't it true?"

"No."

"How do you know it ain't?"

"Because if it was true he wouldn't be so secretive about it. There's nothing to be ashamed of in marrying an honest woman and having a child."

"No," said Mr. Snell. "Nuthin' specially surprisin' about that. Good folks have done it."

"Then why be hiding something? All his old friends are naturally interested in his wife and he'd naturally tell us—unless there was something he was ashamed of."

"Ashamed of? Well, Rebecca, you certainly can talk like a fool when you put your mind on it."

Mrs. Snell flushed. "Really! Indeed! So you think it's perfectly natural for a man to hide from his old friends all knowledge of his marriage—as he would a murder?"

"Yes, if he wants to."

"Well, I don't. And that's the difference. And we'll see what other people in this village are going to think about it."

Mr. Snell stopped, laid a hand on his wife's arm and wheeled her about. He spoke in a low voice, but his words were metallic in their clearness. "Now look here, Rebecca Snell, you jest go slow on startin' that kind of talk. Dr. Alton's a good man. We are mighty lucky to have him in the old doctor's shoes. Longfields is a mighty small village for a

man with such an education as he's got. And if it ever got to his ears that you'd been insultin' his dead wife's memory—well—you'll get jest exactly what you deserve, and I'll help give it to yer. I mean it. Now shut up."

Mrs. Snell glanced at the light blue angry eyes now looking steadily into her own. Between those eyes and her own face, a long and bony finger, quivering with anger, was moving slowly, to and fro. It came very near her face. She blinked, tightened her lips and took a backward step. Then her husband, in a low voice, husky with rage, the vibrating finger almost touching her nose, spoke once more.

"And you *stay* shut up!"

After a pause, just long enough for his message to be acknowledged by a nod of obedience he started on toward the church.

Mrs. Snell followed after.

In that congregation were persons who came to worship their Creator—the ostensible purpose of the gathering. Miss Susan Pendexter, on the other hand, a somewhat emotional spinster, came to worship the preacher, Rev. George Bentley Heywood. She was thrilled by the originality, the power and the beauty of the sermon which to his own wife seemed, as usual, prosy and commonplace. Many were present because afraid to stay away. Among these were the young men. Children, of course, were present under compulsion, accepting the sermon as a punishment.

No gathering could be more democratic. These descendants of the Pilgrims were not encumbered by class distinctions. Judge Dean, for instance, the most influential citizen of the village, would never presume to patronize

either Abner Phillips, the harness maker or Elisha Bisbee, the blacksmith. Uncle Hector, who kept the store, would have snubbed all the reigning monarchs of the earth had he suspected them of willful condescension. The somewhat restless man in a side pew, he whose stiff hair stands straight on end, who snuffs and clears his throat and looks pleasantly around the church, is Lemuel Cobb, the stage driver. He is a descendant of a famous Governor of Plymouth Colony and has a brother who is now President of a Western College. And the two Allen "girls," Nance and Fidelia—now over sixty—have one of the best pews in Church. The fact of their being largely dependent for food and clothing, rent and fuel, on the bounty of their neighbors, lessens in no degree the courtesy they receive.

It was natural that Dr. Alton and his son, this morning, should be objects of lively interest. This interest was all the greater from certain unexplained events in Europe kindly referred to by Mrs. Snell. But other persons were less suspicious than this lady. Nearly all the members of the congregation—and of the township for that matter—were old friends of this Dr. Alton's father. Few among those here present failed to recall, with gratitude and affection, the dead physician. The older members he had either sustained in sickness or had postponed their departure to realms above. The younger ones he had ably assisted into our merry world. This younger Dr. Alton, now present, bore some resemblance to his father. He had a good expression and a pleasant smile, but he was, of course, too young to carry those deeper lines of study, of work and kindly deeds that marked his father's face.

So high were the backs of the pews that the smaller children were almost invisible. Only the tops of their heads were in sight. But Dr. Alton's son, for a wider knowledge of this new world, folded his short legs beneath him and sat upon his heels. This was welcomed—in silence—by many persons in the congregations. They could now satisfy their curiosity as to his appearance. And the face was disappointing. His eyes, as they moved in a drowsy way over the faces about him, seemed dull and almost stupid. They seemed half closed by heavy lids. And his short, cherubic mouth might indicate a want of decision. His hair, short, thick and dark grew in a straight line across his forehead. Altogether, with his stiff hair, plump cheeks, short neck and placid manner, he seemed a different type from the little Yankee boys of Longfields.

Mrs. Waldo Bennett, the tall, straight woman with startled eyebrows, said to herself, as she watched his slow moving eyes, studying in mild surprise the church and the people about him, "That little heathen was never in a house of God before." But she was wrong. This was, to be sure, his first experience in a New England church, but he had been in cathedrals. And he was surprised at the difference in size between this cathedral and those at Milan and Canterbury. Leisurely, and with no embarrassment or self-consciousness, his eyes wandered slowly over various persons who were watching him. But when his eyes encountered Mrs. Snell they opened a trifle wider. There, in surprise, they rested for a moment. For in this lady's face he found, not the amiable curiosity of his grandfather's grateful friends, but a pious disapproval of his very existence. Almost threatening was

her look of hostility, of reprobation and contempt. There was censure in it, and condemnation. She was studying him as one of the Higher Angels might study the meanest imp of Satan. For Mrs. Snell, while not impervious to the consolations of religion, found more solace, just at present, in believing Dr. Alton a special envoy from Sodom and Gomorrah. As for the boy, she detected, in his evil eyes and voluptuous mouth, an agent of the devil for the future debauchery of Longfields. She was not especially prophetic in other matters but, for this boy, she predicted an unspeakable career.

And the boy, while unable to divine all her thoughts or to realize this blighting forecast, did not fail to catch the general message. For a moment he returned her gaze, calmly and undisturbed; then as calmly looked away. He was seeking refuge in the thought that perhaps she hated all other boys just as much. Perhaps the women in this new country were fiercer than those in Europe.

The very next minute, however, something happened—something so much more thrilling that he forgot completely the square jawed, ominous woman. As he looked away from her hostile glare he encountered the eyes of the parson's daughter. And such eyes! How different from Mrs. Snell's! These eyes were the two most astonishing things he had ever seen. They were not far away—in a pew at right angles to his own—and they were looking straight at him! They had thick, dark lashes. They, also, were severe, but in a different way from Mrs. Snell's. They certainly were frowning at him. From Mrs. Snell's eyes he felt like running away—for safety. These other eyes seemed more surprised than angry—as if