

## "HUNTER AND SQUIRREL"

Flay ball of autumn red,  
Chattering there above my head;  
On your swinging maple bough;  
Now in swift staccato note,  
Keeps the treble from thy throat;  
Sure a forest-eid art thou!

Are thy nimble feet could run,  
I could slay thee with this gun,  
Lay thee prone upon the earth,  
Bring thy frolics to an end;  
Would I harm thee little friend?  
No; prolong thy joyous mirth.

Bing thy song and frisk about,  
Through the branches in and out,  
Backwards, forwards, here and there,  
Purring from those glancing eyes,  
With a look of queer surprise  
And a fix'd and silent stare.

Should my foot essay to stir,  
Instantly thy chattering chirp  
Silenced is, and off you flee  
Up the timber either side,  
Caring naught what else betide,  
So that thou thyself art free.

Free thou art for me at least—  
Innocent and tiny beast.  
For this hand shall never draw  
Rife's head on such wee game,  
Save when forced in hunger's name,  
Direct need that knows no law.  
—W. H. Stead, in Youth's Companion.



### CHAPTER III.—CONTINUED.

The man burst the door open with one powerful thrust, and they entered. The pillow was tumbled, an impress of a head, and there was a crumpled handkerchief, still damp from tears. A little round depression at the foot of the bed showed where the dog had lain. De Restaud looked in her wardrobe. He knew she wore that yellow silk; she persisted in that since the stranger had been there. Her very small shoes were all in a row—an untidy one at that. She had worn her little bronze slippers. And here, Annette vouched for this, were all her hats and wraps. She had no money, he was sure of that. Did not Hannah Patten tell him she had refused to give Minny money, for fear the child might run away and get into trouble? He hated Hannah Patten, but he knew her to be honest. There was one man who would dare aid her—that stranger, with his cool gray eyes and contemptuous glance. It was all the sense Minny had, to go to this entire stranger for help; and he would help her; was she not young and pretty and a fool? De Restaud was very white now, and oddly cool. He went to his room for his pistols. His friends, awakened by Louis, were looking at the loading of theirs. Annette had hurriedly prepared coffee which the men drank standing up. Louis brought the horses around.

"Shall I come, monsieur?" he asked, eagerly.  
"No; you would be needed if I did not return. You will tell the general. If my suspicions are true, I shall kill that man or be killed myself. But I will be sure; and all of you wait until I tell you to act. I intend to make no mistakes."

The five men galloped down the road in a haze of golden dust. It was eleven o'clock, and Mme. de Restaud had been gone as many hours. She had a long start on her way, and they might ride far and fast to find her. Dr. John, in his flowered dressing-gown, but without his embroidered cap, which had mysteriously disappeared, sat before the closed door of the log cabin. He was smoking peacefully, and seemed to regard the five strangely-acting men in the road as a pleasing part of the landscape. De Restaud, leaving his companions some little distance away, rode close to the cabin.

"Mr. Oliver is, of course, within?" he said, politely.

The doctor looked up at the pallid face with its blazing eyes, the working lips, the clinched hand, the frightful controlled passion of the man, and answered, calmly, withdrawing his pipe: "Of course."

"He is alone?"

"I think so. His man is cleaning the guns back of the house."

"Mr. Oliver he sleep very late," hissed the Frenchman, forgetting his English in his wrath and muttering something in his own language.

"He do," said the doctor, ungrammatically, with a twinkle in his eye.

"I must ask you, sir, to wake your friend. I have business with him."

"And I must answer, sir, I am very sorry, but I know his temper, and I do



not care to wake my friend. He is not, as your nation say, tres aimable when awakened from slumber."

"I do not come here to quarrel with you," cried the Frenchman, "but with him."

"It would require two to quarrel, Mr. de Restaud, and I am a peaceable man. Therefore I may say I do not wake Mr. Oliver for business."

"It is my belief, old man, you are lying. Oliver is not in your house."

"It is his house; let us at least be correct. Suppose you question his man; he may be willing to wake Mr. Oliver. Or you may settle your business with him. Mike, Mike, I say."

As the big fellow came around the house, grinning sheepishly, the doctor picked up his book.

"Here, or, as your nation say, voila le hired man. He is yours, monsieur. With your pardon, I will resume my chapter."

He received no answer. De Restaud, seeing Mike had a fine rifle in his hand, went back to the waiting men, and they had a conference which ended in all riding closer to the house.

"Go tell your master M. de Restaud desires to see him," said De Restaud, angrily. "I will endure no impudence. Do as I tell you."

"I'm sorry, sir," said Mike, humbly, "I'm am, fur I'd loike to oblige yees, but him an' me set up till late last night waitin' fur the doctor, who'd gone doctorin', an' I was ordered to lit Mither Oliver have his slaps. The doctor's the only wan as Iver I see as could go widout slaps an' appear the fresher fur it."

"Don't lie to me. Stand away. I'll find out if he's in the house. We'll break in the door and search it."

"He might think you robbers and shoot," said the doctor, calmly. "Besides, you are not treating him fairly. Why do you wish to search the house?"

"Because," cried De Restaud, hoarsely, "my wife is gone, and he is the only one who would dare to help her in this country."

"Your pardon, monsieur. Of course you are naturally upset, but Mr. Oliver has only met the lady once; is it not making a story out of nothing?"

"I know her," hissed De Restaud, "and, if he is your friend, he is a blackguard; he is, as I know, the only one about here who would offer to aid her."

"Not the only one," said the little doctor, rising. "I should have been very glad to have helped the young lady escape from your care; any true man would have been. You are rating the settlers here very low, monsieur. Unfortunately, all we hear of you does not point to your making either a happy or a safe home for a good woman. Put up your revolver; I am not at all afraid; the ranchmen here are friendly to me. Now, if you desire, dismount, and I myself will show you through the house."

"Humph! you've changed all of a sudden," grunted one of the men.

"I have always held," said the doctor, pleasantly, "that a man who could not change an opinion was a bigot. Obstinacy is often ignorance. Your errand being such a serious one has quite convinced me that it is not only right but my duty to wake Mr. Oliver."

In his heart the doctor was thinking: "That certainly was Craig I heard in the house; he has got back, and must have heard what I said. His window is open."

"I shall wake Mr. Oliver, then," he said, loudly, as they dismounted and



went into the house, "but I shall not be responsible for his profanity. Craig, open your door, please."

The doctor rapped, but his heart stood still. If Oliver should not be there! The bolt shot back, and the man, half dressed, with bloodshot eyes, disordered hair, and a dazed sort of manner, appeared in the doorway.

"What in — is all the row?" he said, angrily. "You must keep me up all night and wake me in an unearthly hour in the morning. What do they want?"

"Mr. de Restaud's wife is missing. They desire to search your house. Here, gentlemen, is a camp-bed, a trunk and one chair. The lady is not here. Shall we keep on?"

Craig lay back on the bed and drew his traveling-rug over him.

"They have my permission," he said, sleepily. "There's a cellar underneath, and one small barn. Look well under the hay. So your wife has gone, Mr. de Restaud? Perhaps her only relative has had feeling enough to save the poor little thing and has taken her from your guardianship. I fancy you would not care to have that looked into too closely; and if I were you, speaking now as a lawyer, I would not advertise this affair too widely. Your wife might, you know, be persuaded to come back."

The doctor, fearing the consequences, shut the door hastily and led his visitors away. They searched the premises closely, but, not knowing of the buckboard, did not miss it, and the Mexican's good little beast, a lather of foam, was hidden in a grove of pines a quarter of a mile away.

Shortly after his guests had mounted their horses in sullen silence and galloped away, Oliver, newly shaven and carefully dressed, came out in the sunlight. He was ghastly pale, and staggered as he walked.

"I've had Mike make me some coffee," he said, sinking in a chair. "Gad, I'm played out. I wasn't five hours coming back; and I'm a heavy man for the horse. I'd like to own him. I can't sleep; too tired, I suppose. Besides, I was a little worried. Where is our friend?"

"Gone," said the doctor, laconically. "And now, Craig, as questions are in order, where is the Troublesome lady?"

"On her way to Maine, I hope."

"If you are not honest in the matter that man will kill you."

"I have lived long enough on the

frontier, doc, to know that threatened men live long—are safe. I did help Mrs. de Restaud escape; you'd have done the same. She came with great purple marks on her throat, in a piteous state of terror. She is as innocent as a child, utterly ignorant of the world. Only such a woman would have stayed here so long. Any ranchman here with daughters of his own would have helped her. They know what he is, and they are chivalrous men. She came to me because—because—"

"Craig, it's the old story. I don't doubt you're in the right this time—I'd have helped her too—but you had to say sweet things and make love to her. You needn't shake your head; you can't help it."

"On my honor, Dr. John, all that long way I thought of her as of my own little sister sleeping in the old graveyard of the village I left twenty years ago. The man who remembers a child sister would have thought only of her, of the purest things, with little Minny. She has your embroidered cap, old chap, and you will treasure it as a relic of lovely woman if ever she returns the loan."

"But you're not a married man, Craig," said the doctor, plaintively, "and women can be aggravating, especially little ones with red hair, as Mike says she's got. There must be something on the Frenchman's side."

"Lunacy. There is my coffee at last. We'll go for elk to-morrow instead of to-day; I hear there are some on Sisty's peak."

"But, Craig," said the doctor, as the other stretched out his tall length and walked wearily to the house, "there's the Mexican who will bring back your team and whose horse you had; he might tell."

"I have bought him at a good price," said Oliver, carelessly. "Still, if he does tell, if the Frenchman pays more, why then the Frenchman and I will settle it. If one is put to sleep to-day or a half century hence, what matters it? I like life, but I am not shirking death."

### CHAPTER IV.

"If I ever become poor and friendless, and should be walking along the streets of a city about six o'clock at night and the smell of fried onions were wafted towards me, I should become a criminal. I would steal," said Doctor John, firmly, "so that I also might have them."

"Rather a lovely taste," said Oliver, lazily. They had been to the top of Sisty's peak for elk all that day, but found no sign of one, only a young antelope, the chops of which, with the fried onions, Mike was cooking for supper.

The doctor, radiant in his flowered dressing gown, but, alas! minus his beautifully-embroidered cap, stirred the tobacco in his pipe and leaned comfortably back in his chair.

"Don't scorn onions, Craig. I know you better. Here in this desolate region, miles away from womenkind, you positively revel in 'em."

"Womenkind?" Oliver asked, vaguely.

"The vegetable, fortunately. Your thirst for tobacco, your senseless haste to return to Denver, your restlessness, are bad signs. Eve entered our paradise, and back we go to civilization to-morrow, because we expect a letter from her. I shall prescribe for your case a dose of moral reflections, with references to celebrated cases of the sort I have heard you discuss with disgust."

"How far imagination will carry a man—almost to idiocy," murmured Oliver.

"The question," continued the doctor, plaintively, as if he had not heard, "is, what are you going to do? You meant well; I should no doubt have assisted the Troublesome lady—not driving so far or so fast, perhaps. But your honest Mexican accomplice rode his 'gooda beasta' to Parkville last night, and he and the well-mannered Louis were amiably intoxicated together. Monsieur is probably well informed of all that took place."

"Which was little enough. I would have told him; but I had no desire to quarrel with him, or perhaps fight a ridiculous French duel over a young woman I had only seen twice, and both of us duelists possibly landed in jail for breaking the peace by some sagacious sheriff."

"I would not go your bail, either, my friend," smiled Dr. John. "I would like to see you shut up awhile; you've sent enough to prison walls in your time. If I don't mistake—passers are few this lonely way, and his horse was a roan—here comes the Mexican and his 'gooda beasta,' also a nondescript creature following, who I hope is not the Troublesome lady returning."

"Your judgment in matters pertaining to female kind is not accurate," said Oliver, who had jumped up anxiously at the doctor's words. "This is an elderly, gaunt and tall female, and she sits that mule as gingerly as if he were liable to go out from under her any moment. Do you know, I half believe that is Aunt Hannah."

"Didn't know you had relatives," said the doctor, following Oliver to the road.

"I haven't. Mrs. Minny has; and if the old lady is seeking her, where is the young lady, and what kind of a difficulty have I got myself into? She looks warlike enough."

"I have brought ze-a lady from ze railroad," said the Mexican, obsequiously. "She com-a M. de Restaud. He sent-a here for madame."

"So you told him I had taken her to the train?" Oliver said, quickly, a dangerous light in his gray eyes. "You were a fool. I shall come here again, and I can pay more than the Frenchman. I would even have bought that horse of yours at your most exorbitant price."

"You haf not enough mon-nay for to buy my horse, senior. He is one race horse. He haf win grand mon-nay for me. I leaf ze lady with you; my mule he tire, she yell all ze way and bump seround."

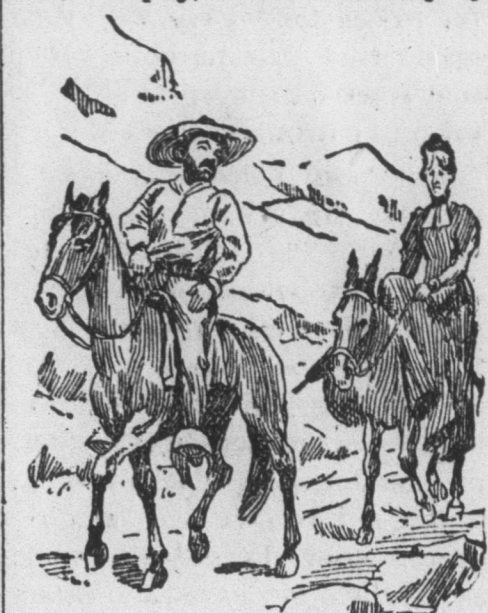
While he spoke, the old lady, with more haste than elegance, slid to the ground, unfastened a carpetbag tied to

the saddle, straightened her black alpaca skirt, and delivered a five-dollar bill to her guide.

"All you'll git," she said, in a high-pitched nasal voice, "if you talk lingo forever. I ain't to home in a kentry where my native tongue is butchered as you do it, and that's all I'll pay you, if you talk balderdash all night."

"Si, senora," gasped the Mexican.

"Yes, I do see; and I've a mind to report your insolence to the authorities, for that 'see' is all I've got out of you the whole way. And if we ain't leagued over unprofitable meanders and everlasting hills this day, and barren wastes, to last me till I die. When I git back east I'll hate to look at the settin' sun for getting reminded of this journey an' Minny's misfortunes here. Now, he being gone, misters," she said, abruptly, as Juan rode rapidly



away, "that Warn, as he calls himself—which of you is the man that made the mischief in my nephew by marriage's family?"

It was rather an embarrassing question. The doctor politely requested that she sit down and rest, as she seemed much flurried, and they could talk more comfortably. After a sharp glance at him she consented, sitting carefully in a chair with a groan. She was a tall, raw-boned woman, flat as an ironing-board, tanned and wrinkled, with strong features, a mass of untidy gray hair and handsome blue eyes with a sly twinkle in them as if she could see a joke and make one, too. Somehow the barren life of New England brings wit and pathos to the surface; of the first, the dryest, quaintest sort, as of the other the saddest and most hopeless. Her ungloved hands were work-worn and large-knuckled, hands of that pride of the village, a good housekeeper and one who has flowers in summer of her own tending. She pushed an unstable bonnet she wore back on her head and looked at Oliver severely.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Darky and His Check.

"One of the incidents of the boom at Chattanooga, which happened to fall under my immediate observation, interested me greatly," said a Tennessean. A negro there had come into the ownership of a small piece of real estate worth, when he got it, about one hundred dollars. During the boom this property became very desirable, and could probably have been bought for a few hundred dollars had the would-be purchaser not scared the darky by offering him several thousand, but a deal was finally closed for ten thousand dollars, and the negro went to the bank with a check to get the money.

"How do you want it?" asked the cashier.

"Gib it to me in silber."

The cashier began to pile up the sacks of silver and the negro's eyes grew bigger and bigger. Finally he could stand it no longer.

"Stop, boss," he said, "gib me a dollar and a half an' keep de res' fer me."

—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Getting the Whole Story.

Attorney—I insist on an answer to my question. You have not told me all the conversation. I want to know everything that passed between you and Mr. Jones on the occasion to which you refer.

Reluctant Witness—I've told you everything of any consequence.

"You have told me that you said to him: 'Jones, this case will get into the courts some day.' Now I want to know what he said in reply."

"Well, he said: 'Brown, there isn't anything in this business that I'm ashamed of, and if any snoopin' little yee-hawkin', four-by-six, gimlet-eyed shyster lawyer, with half a pound of brains and sixteen pounds of jaw, ever wants to know what I've been talking to you about you can tell him the whole story.'—Chicago Tribune.

### It All Depends.

A New York lady met in Paris M. Aude, now attached to the French legation in Washington. "Have you zee beecerle in Amairka?" he asked. When she comprehended what it was he wished to know, she informed him that the bicycle had reached these wilds and had already become a favorite instrument of torture. He next asked: "Zen I can take ze leetle run on ze beecerle from Washon to Philadelph and back before dinnair, n'est-ce pas?"

"That depends on how often a week you dine," said the lady, blandly.—National Tribune.

### Some Georgia Gumdrops.

One gallon of whisky is equal to one bushel of misery.

Make yer hay while the sun's a-shinin', but don't spend all yer money fer handkerchiefs to wipe off the perspiration.

Don't ketch a rabbit by the tail an' then go to hollerin' when he gits away from you.

Don't depend on the world to give you a epitaph. You write your epitaph while you're a-livin'.

When the cow kicks the milk over jes' take yer coffee straight an' thank God fer sweet'nin'.—Atlanta Constitution.

Are you going to buy a

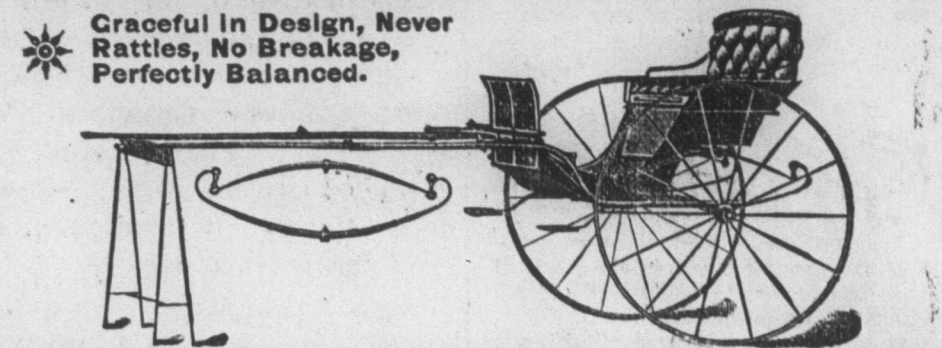
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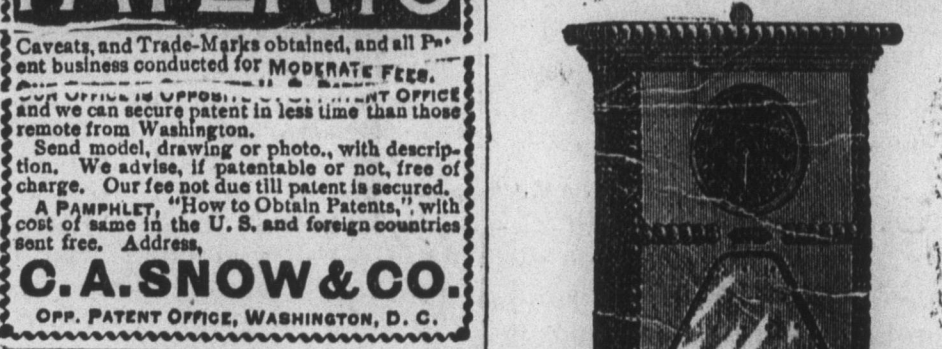
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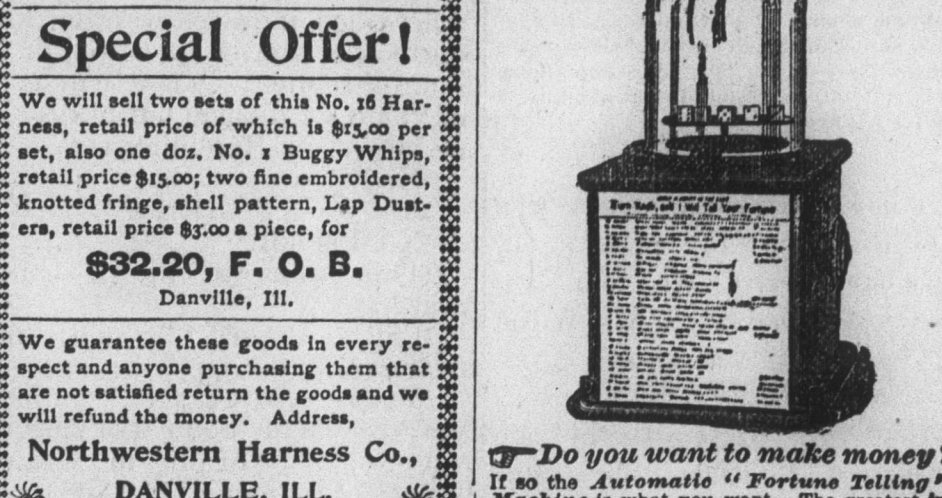


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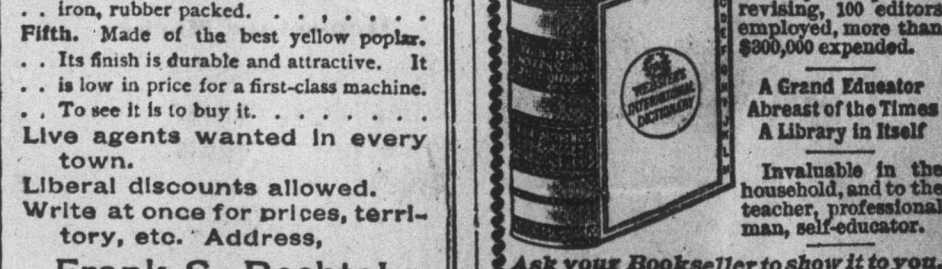
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