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STORIES FOR IDLE HOURS



Angelica of Michigan

By CAROLEN BATESON

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THE Florentines were proud of Giuseppe. To tourists the innkeeper pointed him out along with the city's curios as the painter who was to equal Raphael and revive in Italy the glories of bygone centuries.

"His faults?" And for once the innkeeper's rhapsody halted out of deference to the well bred young lady at the window. "It is true Giuseppe has faults. But, signorina, what will you? He is young, and geniuses are not found under every bush even in Italy."

Angelica looked. Besides being a conscientious traveler anxious to miss nothing, she was a painter, too, in her prim, orderly way and before her Italian sojourn could boast an occasional reputation at a county fair. She had already heard of Giuseppe at the studio in Rome, and her interest grew now that she saw the man. Her trained glance noted his perfect proportions. The soft roundness of the figure matched with the handsome head, in which, she could swear, no concrete fact had ever found lodgment. Such a being should be free, a ward of the nature he interpreted. He needed blue sky and sunshine for back-ground.

"His faults—well, who could rebuke the lightness of a butterfly? And yet in his expression there was a restless hungering that explained the artist. It was a sorrowful look, but beautiful and in harmony with the features. Its dissatisfaction, free from plaint or protest, had long been sweetened into aspiration.

"How could he work in a Grand Rapids winter?" she thought. "But even in Grand Rapids he would still believe in Italy."

Then she glanced away. Anglo-Saxon secretiveness hid her interest, for the great painter, seeing her, had paused and was staring up enrapt from the walk below. The rudeness was unaccounted-for by the window sash she looked so like a picture in an exhibition. Her clear eyes had had a purr, resembling nothing he had ever seen in life. Such faces he sometimes dreamed of—after confession. He loved them as he loved the church, with its poetry and mystic symbolism. Her gentle coldness, so different from Florida, gave her a holy seeming, and he would have sworn to thrill his soul, like a violin's power, as some-thing high and fine, almost past the senses. That such a creature should be beyond all touch of passion affected him with ineffable sadness, but to the artist's mad passion holds an element of deep joy. Her height above him brought a consciousness of his own sin oppressed mortality. Her eyes wandered beyond him in apparent carelessness.

"She is an angel from heaven, and she knows not that I live," he murmured. "Yet if she knew surely she would plead for me with Mary and the blessed saints."

"A stranger?" she asked, pointing to the register when Giuseppe, who would plead for me with Mary and the blessed saints.

"Yes, she is a stranger," cooed the host, pointing to the register when Giuseppe, who would plead for me with Mary and the blessed saints.

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words and much humility. His works spoke for him. She saw there Madonna eyes and quiet valleys and that peaceful calm of evening when God walked abroad in the garden. Everywhere was faith, tinged by sorrow to a deeper richness, and poetry and intuitive comprehension of those things beyond that humankind must strive for, never reaching. A despair of her own poor reasoning talent seized her.



"The picture shall say it all!" Looking, she understood the man and the strange sweet longing of his countenance. When he unveiled a sketch of herself tears rose with the intensity of her delight. Unfinished as it was, it was the gem of the collection. But the beauty, the exaltation of it, were such as she had never possessed. And he believed her like that! He was great, he was good, and she knew it now with the suddenness of a revelation—she loved him.

"You were so like a picture at the window," he apologized, "that I studied you. You forgive?"

"Surely I forgive. You—you shall study me again."

"Oh, if I might and here! At the window you hung so far above the line."

"I shall be on the line hereafter if you paint me so." And her voice sank to a reverent whisper.

The artist's face flushed. He was a creature of emotions too natural to seek concealment. Without troubling to separate the woman from the conception he struggled with an explanation.

"Oh, signorina, the years that I have longed for you! I cannot make words talk, but the picture shall say it all—how I was weak and wicked and you mercifully came to my salvation; how you looked at me to lift me out of sin. You will let me love you? I am bold to say it, because I ask nothing. You are so far away that my love cannot offend more than it does the Virgin."

Angelica passed the night with open eyes examining her happiness. The letters of a young attorney in Grand Rapids had been destroyed, they showed so commonplace beside the glory of this new passion. Giuseppe should love her, as he would, and when the time came that it was not unaccountably to yield—in blissful wakefulness she remembered the thousand ways that she might tell him.

The attings began. The artist worked feverishly and said little. Angelica began to find him more complex than she had thought.

"You are like religion. You make me sad," he said when asked about his somberness. But the answer dissolved in smiles and filled her with remembrance. Was it only black eyed Florida, then, who could make him smile?

His interest in her personality was meager, too, for a lover. When she spoke of Grand Rapids he had murmured:

"The rapids—back by the sea where you live?"

ture grew with her love. The day it was completed and showed to her she could have cried in despair, even while she protested of herself before the genius that had produced it. It was a perfect face—the woman's, but an angel's. It was the soul of goodness looking down on sinners with unscorning pity, glorious, enduring up steep and on to heights, then flitting on forever, always unattainable, always exalting. So Beatrice must have been when her eyes drew Dante out of purgatory into heaven.

Giuseppe loved it—not her. There was no common ground between them. The girl's hands clinched with the hopelessness of rivalry against the nonexistent. And, insult to insult, the thing had stolen her lineaments!

"She is great," Angelica said, dashed back the tears. "She will make you famous—and me, perhaps." There was a ring of sarcasm in the last words that puzzled Giuseppe.

"She is great. I have dwelt with her day and night, until I understood. She has been my salvation. She has led me on and on. I am no longer a painter, but an artist. And she is you. You have taught me this. I thank you."

Angelica jerked back her hand from his reverent lips and alighted her exasperation, "No, no—she is ugly, ugly."

She had hoped to retire with dignity. The dam once broken, her emotions poured out in spite of her. "She isn't me. You have no right to paint that thing and call it me. When you said you loved me, I believed it. I loved you in spite of your faults. But you are wicked and ungrateful. You demand of me perfection—and such perfection is impossible."

Giuseppe rubbed his hand across his forehead, stumped. The picture and Angelica, it seemed, were two separate entities. Galatea, made flesh, was no longer Galatea. Here was a woman surer, the one he had painted. But the blessed angels, did they not exist?

"Do you love me?" she demanded, with a stamp of her foot. "Me or her, which? Look at her. She is a coquette. You will never reach her, however you try. I will make you happy—so happy, Giuseppe. But choose, choose."

Giuseppe stood open mouthed for a few dazed moments till he had stared her into focus. Not his angel now, not above him. He might touch, possess, she was his. The earth called loudly to him. Heaven was far off. The clouds



gave way. It was falling like Lucifer from a great height swiftly, giddily. And still as he clasped her in his arms she kept demanding:

"Me or her? Prove it. In his glance was the cynicism of an enlightened century over which unbelief has swept. He considered the tender pathos of its eyes with their promises that could never be brought quite to fulfillment. He marked its spirituality, pleading mutely against the flesh, sacred, distant, always distant and un-reachable. And it was he who he painted such a meaning into those features. It was he who had cared for heaven while there was an earth. The corners of his mouth twitched. Without warning he burst into a long, loud laugh. His cold materialism started dead. Before she could prevent he had seized a palette knife and slashed the canvas from edge to edge.

"I have proved it," he whispered. "She is worse than a coquette. She is a lie. But I have you. I am satisfied."

"You," the innkeeper was wont to confide to guests, "that is Giuseppe, the painter, and his wife. They are a pair of lovers—so happy. Oh, it is most unfortunate; but he has ruined himself. If only he had married Florida—"

Giuseppe stared the good, and it took time to get it. "Contented; yes. But she wasn't it," Giuseppe said as he laid away the canvas. "For she comes to me in my sleep and whispers of the blissed up man that is the goddess of man. She made me sorrowful, but she would have saved my soul. She was a coquette; she would never have satisfied. I should have said 'no' and 'no'."

"You regret?" eagerly whispered the innkeeper. "That is good. Regret,

paint again, and you will not be Giuseppe, the master."

His expression was checked by Giuseppe's smile. "I regret nothing. I am happy as contented as an animal without a soul. It is sweet to be so. And a man cannot have all things. I shall paint again, to be sure, but I shall never be an artist."

American Girls and Titles. The responsibility for the present humiliating slave trade in which American girls are sold to the titled decadents of England and the continent is almost wholly the fault of the men of this country. This opinion is offered only after years of observation and consideration of our social conditions and after a pathological study of American men. Their open astonishment and chagrin at this phenomenon would be vastly amusing were it not so pathetic. Our men have a helpless inability to see themselves. Nor is the responsibility of the mother too slight of for the foreign suitor begins with her, as he does in Europe. She is the mother of the child which is first succumb to his studied charm.

This outer citadel is carried with as finishing ease, as he quickly discovers, and for three reasons. The mother is easily dazzled; her social foundations do not go down deep in the class to which she almost invariably belongs. Her husband has made every dollar of the lure of those millions without which there would not be this problem to solve. Second, the woman who sees what a given man really is, who estimates him at all justly, who begins even to understand man's social standards either in this country or Europe, are rare indeed.

The American mother usually is clearly out of her depth at the start, as unwise as a child to counsel her daughter. She is not equipped for it. It is not her work.

In the third place must be considered that subtle relationship of sex which European men of any age always have the art of establishing with a woman of whatever age, their attention, their quick courtesy toward women, their habit of listening absently when a woman speaks—all this is so absolute, so new to the American mother that she becomes hypnotized by it and can no longer distinguish truth from flattery or a mere national point of etiquette from a personal thoughtfulness and delicate tenderness of feeling.

The Right Address. A young New York broker of considerable talents fell in with an old school friend who had gone on the road. "Whenever you're in town come up and bunk with me," urged his friend as they separated, "no matter what old time it is. If I'm not there just go ahead and make yourself at home. I'll be sure to turn up before day-break."

Soon after the salesman arrived in town about midnight and, remembering his friend's invitation, sought out his boarding house. There was only a dim light flickering in the hall, but he gave the bell a manful pull. Presently he found himself face to face with a landlady of grim and terrible aspect.

"Does Mr. Smith live here?" he faltered. "He does," snapped the landlady. "You can bring him right in!"—Every-body's.

To Be Sure. The necessities of conversation frequently lead to odd observations. Mrs. Sullivan and Mrs. Harrigan the other day were conversing across the fence that separated their respective clothes yards. A high wind was blowing, and each woman from her post amid the lines had to shout to make herself heard.

"Mrs. Sullivan," shouted Mrs. Harrigan, "did you go to the ball last night?" "I was!" "Was what?" cried Mrs. Sullivan. "What?"—Youth's Companion.

Water at Meals in Hot Weather. Do not drink water or other liquids when you have food in your mouth, for one part of the danger of drinking at meals is that the fluid may wash down into the stomach parishes of food which have not been thoroughly masticated and impregnated by the digestive juices in the mouth.

The second danger, especially in summer, is that your drink may be too cold, like ice water, which so many foolish persons indulge in too much.

When you swallow ice water at mealtimes the water simply paralyzes the walls of the stomach for a time and stops the flow of gastric juices until the body is able to overcome the chill and allows the juices to flow once more. But if you chew your food well and DO NOT DRINK VERY COLD FLUIDS there is no danger.

Birds and Their Baths. Naturalists tell us that in making their toilets some birds bathe only, some water and dust, while others prefer dust and no water. Birds are not only nice in the choice of bath water, but also very particular about the quality of their toilet dust.

Wild ducks, though feeding by salt water, prefer to bathe in fresh water pools and will fly long distances inland to running brooks and ponds, where they preen and dress their feathers in the early hours of the morning. Sparrows bathe often, both in water and in dust. They are not so particular about the quality of water as about the quantity of the dust. The city sparrow will take a water bath where he can get it. Road dust, the driest and finest possible, suits him best. Partridges prefer dry leaves under the grass and fill their feathers with cool earth.

Most birds are fond of ash. Take a walk some early morning across a field where booties have burned and see the numbers of winged creatures that rise suddenly from the ash beds. A darting form, a small cloud of ash, and the bathers disappear.

THE CHAPERON.

How She Came to Withdraw One of the Camp Rules.

By CLYDE LAWRENCE.
(Copyright, 1909, by Associated Literary Press.)

"Young ladies, I wish to make an important announcement," said Miss Darby, teacher of the class in French at the Wellington private school for young ladies.

The fourteen young ladies looked up in expectancy.

"During the summer vacation, beginning two weeks hence, I shall have tents on the shore of the lake, and such of you as can arrange it with your parents may summer there. There will be boating, bathing and fishing. Fresh meats and vegetables will be supplied every day. It is a new departure, and I hope it will be a success."

It was seen that she hadn't quite finished yet, and the applause was withheld.

"It will be a young ladies' camp in the strictest sense of the word," she continued. "No members of the other sex will be permitted near it. Farmer Jackson will see to that. That is all. Hand in your names as soon as possible, please."

"But won't our brothers and cousins be allowed to come to see us?" asked Miss Harden for the rest of the class.

"Impossible," she replied in French. "In your case, Miss Harden, I happen to know that you have neither brother nor cousin of the male sex."

"But I have a—"

No, she didn't say it. The teacher opened her eyes very wide and drew herself up and frightened her.

Miss Pearl Harden was fatherless, and her widowed mother had only a limited income. There were other people who had to consult the matter of income as well, and when Miss Darby had made up her mind for the summer camp it totaled seven cents. Six of them had no complaint of the rules to be enforced; the seventh said nothing, but seemed to be thinking a great deal.

Vacation came. The camp was pitched and occupied, and Farmer Jackson took a shotgun into the fields to look to her charges. The boy approached to the camp.

Everything went along quietly for a week, and the enemy was lulled into a sense of security. No pirate craft approached, and Farmer Jackson went to bed with conscience free from killing. Then Miss Darby took chances. She wanted some things from her room in the village, and she arranged with the driver of the provision wagon to ride up with him.

Halfway to town a wheel came off the vehicle, and after gazing at the wreck for five minutes the driver announced that no four wheeled wagon could continue its mad career on three wheels. This meant that Miss Darby must walk. She gave up her attempt to look to her charges. The boy showed her a short cut across the fields and went off with the horse, but he did not warn her to watch out for a red and white bull pasturing in one of the fields.

Miss Darby soon had one of her all her French exclamations. She first bawled rumbles like distant thunder, then a savage howl, then a screeching cry, and the driver of the cart and the sight of a creature bearing down upon her. She ran, of course. There were two shade trees standing close together, and she reached one and had gained a perch ten feet high while the bull stopped to sniff at the hat that had blown from her head. Women are not natural climbers, but under stress of peril they have been known to add that feat to their many accomplishments.

"Go away—go right away from here!" commanded Miss Darby in both French and English as the bull came up and pawed and bellowed. He absolutely refused. Then Miss Darby called for help, but no help came.

An hour had passed when the bull went to the creek to drink. He didn't forget the lady up the tree, however, and he looked back, and she realized that to descend would be to bring him back on the charge. He had satisfied his thirst when he suddenly emitted a bellow of defiance and went dashing across the field. There was another intruder. This time it was a young man. He heard the bellow, saw the bull and at once made for the tree. He came up at a hot pace, made a long spring to catch a branch and escaped a vicious sweep of the horns by inches. He had been settled on a branch for three minutes before he heard a voice calling:

"Mr. what's your name?" "Mr. what's your name?" "Mr. what's your name?"

"Won't he get tired and leave us pretty soon?" "It will take a week to tire him out," was the reply. "Yes, I expect to be here for at least seven days. You can see how mad and determined he is. You had better do yourself to a limb, so that when you grow weak from hunger you will not fall to the ground."

"Mercy! Mercy! But you can't mean it, monsieur!" "You had started for the village, probably. When you don't return the girls will think you have eloped. This is just the season for elopements, you know. Let me stand up and look for the camp. I see it. The girls are running around in wild excitement. A boat with a man in it is drawing near, and you are not there to shoo him away."

"Oh, my unhappy self!" moaned Miss Darby. "I shall be blamed. No one will believe me. I shall be disgraced!" The teacher shed tears in French and was quiet for a few minutes. Mr. Hope watched her and saw that a mental struggle was going on. He was too wise to interrupt, and presently she said in very humble English:

"Mr. Hope, does Miss Harden's mother know that you love her daughter?" "I was to have seen her tomorrow to tell her and ask her consent to the marriage."

"Mr. Hope, can the creature below be driven away?" interrupted Miss Darby, with hope to her tones.

"Possibly." "And it doesn't get to the young ladies' ears that I was—was up a tree?" "Not unless you tell the story yourself."

"And you could accompany me to camp the same as if I had met you in the village?" "Just the same. Yes, I could accompany you to camp, and I could take a stroll with Miss Harden and have a talk, and you could let some of the other fellows pay calls and add to the rest."

"Mr. Hope, please to drive the creature hence." Mr. Hope dropped his hands and walked to the gate, and while the bull was eating at it the young man, wearing down and grabbed him by the tail and twisted and shouted. Away went the frightened bellow on a gallop, and Miss Darby was amused down. Two hours later she was sitting to her campers.

"Young ladies, I beg to announce that the restriction against male visitors to this camp has, for good and sufficient reasons, been withdrawn. No applause, please."

Forgotten by Death. Once upon a time, in the days when things never happened, there lived a man who feared only one thing and that was death. If he could live forever, he thought, how fine it would be. Maybe death overtook him and decided to grant his wish, or perhaps being busy talking off young children, promising young men and women, or parents who were needed, death simply forgot him. At any rate, the man lived on and on. He outlived his family, his descendants, generation after generation, all his friends, and the descendants of his friends. He one knew him, and his day of usefulness was so long ago that, having none of the hopes, ambitions, or experiences of today, it was as if he talked in a different language. He lived on, and on, and forever, but death had forgotten him, and though he prayed to die as bravely as he had once prayed to live, he couldn't die. And if you sorrow for one who has lost his life, think how much worse it would be to never lose it; to be like this third old man whom death has forgotten.—Arthur Globe.

Tibetan Bull Drums. A drum of an extreme reputation of nature is one used by the lamas of Tibet as some of their church ceremonies. For this the drum of two sizes, preferably of silver, are used, and over the concave side of each is stretched the skin of a snail. The two snails are then cemented at the vertices to either side of a wooden disk covered with a cotton cloth, the stretched skins being outermost. These drums are often ornamented by having the heads of devils and such like horses, the more equine the better, painted upon them in red and blue colors. This method of painting them is rather curious. By the wooden disk between the two halves a cord is fastened by which the drum can be suspended and then rapidly rotated. Two short cords with knobs at their ends hang down in such a way that as the drum rotates they strike alternately on either face and thus produce a singular "tum tum."

"University of the Stomach." "We need a university of the stomach," said a well known St. Louis physician recently, "with a full set of professors of nutrition, digestion, assimilation and waste, as well as of general physiology, anatomy and general biology, or, better yet, each college and every common school in the land should teach how to take care of the body and how to save the stomach, particularly in the summer months, when, unfortunately in diet and living renders a person especially liable to disease."

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