

A Merry Christmas to All

It is our sincere wish, and we are doing our best to help you have it by filling our store with a stock of

Christmas Goods

So reasonable in price that Santa Claus can afford to visit and carry good cheer to every home. Our stock is not such as is selected from a catalogue list, but was selected with great care by a personal visit to the great national headquarters for goods of this character. We feel sure that we have anticipated your wants in this line, and will be glad if you will call and see our goods, which are now on display, and make your selections before they are picked over.

We are also prepared to give you the best values in

Staple and Fancy Groceries.

As we have always done. You cannot find the equal of the Coffee we are selling at ten cents a pound, and you cannot match the grades of Flour we are offering at the price. We guarantee to match anybody's prices on Groceries. It will be to your interest to give us your patronage. A full stock at bargain prices.

Yours truly,

E. A. HENDLEY.

Now is the Time

To select your Fall Suit, and this is the place.

We show you all the latest imported goods, and want your patronage. In order to interest you we are quoting prices that will cause competitors restless days and sleepless nights, but don't you worry. The dollars saved will jingle in your pocket as we are satisfied with a very small profit.

Men's Suits, In every imaginable coloring, cut in all styles, \$1.98 to \$20.00.

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HATS, SHOES, DRY GOODS AND FURNISHINGS.

Our line is complete and embraces all the leading styles. Come and see our windows for prices; they are lower than the lowest. Come and see us before you buy. We can satisfy you.

Yours for business,

BLACKER BROS.

Sandford Building.

Leading Firm of Rockingham

EGGS WANTED!

Bring me your Eggs. Will pay 22 cents a dozen in trade for them.

The place to buy Staple and Fancy Groceries. Get my prices on Flour bought in car lots. Come to see me.

JOHN MORRISON.

The WAY Of the TRUTH

By EVERETT HOLBROOK

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LANGDON MORRISON'S uncle had said to him: "You are too young to make such a decision. The young lady may be the essence of perfection; I say not a word to the contrary. But don't marry her yet. Wait. You haven't engaged yourself to her. Don't go abroad. Travel for a year, and then see what you two people think of each other."

And Langdon had gone to the girl whom he loved and had told her that he was going abroad on business for his uncle, and the lie had blistered his heart, harder and harder afterward, as is the habit of blisters both physical and spiritual.

Upon the other side of the water the young man had strayed out of the way regions and returned to Paris to find a great accumulation of mail and cablegrams. His uncle's death was the news that had been flashed to him under the ocean. He had inherited a great fortune. By the slower medium of the mails there had come word that the woman whom he had lied to and run away from had married Dudley Warner. Then young Mr. Morrison perceived that his inheritance was of no use to him; that he might as well have received the gold upon a desert island, where it could neither benefit himself nor any one else.

All the way across the ocean Morrison had repeated to himself one question: "Why did she choose him? Why him of all men?" And he could find no answer except that Warner's whole life had been imposture and theft, the unscrupulous enjoyment of that which was not rightfully his. The man had assiduously served the devil and had always been paid in stolen goods. He had never been openly disgraced. Undoubtedly Viola Dane had accepted him upon his own false and perjured self valuation.

Morrison spent his first day in New York absolutely in retirement, except for a lawyer's visit. He was striving to school himself to meet Viola with precisely the right countenance. It was no part of his plan of life to give up the sight of her. He would be to her all that he honorably might. There would be no peril to her, for it was now clear that she had never cared for him more than she had let be seen, and that was little enough.

At 3 o'clock in the morning he was lying awake, deadly tired, unable to close his eyes. There is a weakness that comes with weariness, an excess of all the tender sentiments and of self pity that a man should be ashamed of. There was a knock upon the door, and a muffled voice called, "Telegram!"



THE TELEGRAM FROM BOSTON.

Morrison arose and received the message, which had been sent from Boston and ran as follows:

Dudley Warner in M. G. Hurt in cab tonight. Chance of fatal result. I have kept name quiet. Tell Viola and come with her. Saw your arrival and address in afternoon paper.

The sender of this message was Dr. John Newton. The letters "M. G." stood for Massachusetts General Hospital, where Newton was a surgeon. He was a cousin of Morrison and had often been his adviser in earlier days.

Mrs. Warner's address was not given in the telegram, and it was obvious that Dr. Newton had not known it. Otherwise he would have felt compelled to communicate directly with her. This involved the further inference that Warner was unconscious and that the "chance of fatal result" amounted to a strong probability.

Upon this matter Morrison strove to think sanely and decently. He could not hope for Warner's death.

Before her marriage Viola had been a teacher of music in a private school. It was possible that her address could be ascertained at that place, though it was summer and the school must be closed. The building when he reached it in the gray dawn seemed entirely deserted, but a vigorous ring at the bell brought forth a servant who by the great good fortune knew where the Warners had lived. Her information guided Morrison to a boarding house, and in the parlor thereof at 6 in the morning the young man confronted a shrewd faced but not unkindly woman.

If you are bilious and seeking advisers, Take DeWitt's Little Early Risers. Just before going to bed, You will find on the morrow, You are rid of your sorrow— That's all; just enough said.

These famous pills do not gripe, but move the bowels gently and easily cleansing the liver. Their tonic effect gives strength to the glands, preventing return of the disorder.

WHEN IN HAMLET

Take your meals at the Hamlet Restaurant, Opposite the S. A. L. Hotel. Good meals at 25 cents. C. H. Spencer, Prop.

to whom he disclosed as much of his errand as seemed necessary.

"Mrs. Warner isn't here," said the landlady, "She's gone to visit some friends in Newark, but she'll be back during the forenoon."

"I will wait," said Morrison.

The landlady twirled a plain gold ring upon her finger and appeared to consult this familiar token for advice. "Do you want to know what I'd do if I were you?" she asked suddenly. "You are a friend of hers, a real friend of hers, ain't you? Well, you go on to Boston by the first train and leave word for her to follow you."

"What do you mean?" the young man demanded. The landlady looked over one of her thin, angular shoulders and then over the other, though there obviously was no one within hearing.

"If you want my opinion," she said, "I think that man has skipped; that's what they call it—skipped. I've looked him up. He's all tied up in no end of troubles. He's no good and never was. He's run away and left her. But she doesn't know it."

Morrison gripped the arms of his chair and stared at the woman. "He owes me money," she continued. "But I don't care for that. I like her, do you understand? She's been an ornament to this house; that's what I call her—an ornament. And if there's any decency left in him perhaps you



"TELL HER THE TRUTH," HE SAID.

think enough of her to try to bring it out. Perhaps you can straighten him up and advise him and bring him back when he gets well. But anyhow you see him first—before she does, do you understand?—and keep the truth from her."

Morrison arose slowly and stepped forward to take the woman's stiff and withered hand.

"I understand," said he. "I'll do it. Take this money. She may not have enough for the journey. Don't say I left it. Don't say that I was here."

He walked toward the door, and when his hand was on the knob he turned suddenly.

"Tell her the truth," he said. "Say I was here and left the money, thinking she might lose time if she happened to lack the necessary amount at the moment. I don't feel like leaving a lie behind me for her."

It was 1 o'clock when Morrison reached Boston, and he drove immediately to the hospital. Newton gave him no greeting but a grip of the hand.

"You are just in time," he said. "A shudder ran over Morrison's gigantic frame, and the sudden, spasmodic pressure of his fingers made the doctor wince.

"He is conscious, or was so ten minutes ago," said Newton, "but it's all over. I have had a telegram from her. She cannot be here till late in the afternoon, and I think she will not see him alive."

"How was he hurt?" "A trolley car, a cab and the hand of Providence," said the doctor slowly. "The man has confessed to me that he was running away."

"What has he said of her?" "He talks mostly about himself," was the reply. "He's afraid we're not doing everything we can for him. He's afraid to die. I've heard a good deal from him about the hard luck that he's had in the world, but very little about his affection for his wife."

"We must fix up some kind of a story for her," said Morrison, turning a shade paler as he spoke.

It was 6 o'clock when Viola reached the hospital. She was shown at once to Dr. Newton's room. The physician and Morrison rose and faced her in silence as she entered. She looked from one to the other.

"He is dead," she said quietly. The two men inclined their heads. Then the doctor looked at Morrison, expecting him to speak. The young man was white as paper, and his lips were firmly compressed.

"If you will excuse me," said the doctor, "I have many duties. I will leave you together."

Morrison looked at her, his deep blue eyes drinking in the beauty for which they had thirsted so long. He was surprised to find her so little changed. He had expected that she would seem older, different, a woman with eyes for the past. He found her the same. She was neither spoiled nor in any way changed. Her wide, brown eyes still looked to the future. They were open, like a child's, as they had always been. She had no sign of her beauty, her innocence, her girlishness of her hope. She was as she had been when he had stood in the light of her presence and had told her that he was going abroad "upon his uncle's business." The shame of that memory sickened him.

"Viola," he said, "I was with Dudley when he died. He told me the whole truth about himself, and I am going to tell it to you—because I can't help it." "I am very glad," she said, looking

straight into his eyes. "I hate a lie. As to this truth, I already know it. He had deserted me. If he still had any love for me, it was choked by his own troubles and fears."

"It is hard," Morrison began. "It was hard," she corrected him, "but it was known and suffered weeks ago. Let us not speak of that. Tell me what must be told and advise me as to what must be done."

Morrison stood speechless. His heart was throbbing out the question: "What if I told her a lie? If I had brought her false messages in this bitter hour?"

Presently they sat down and talked together a long time, with sincerity, without exaggeration, without blame for the dead, who in life had been himself and no other, working out the nature that was in him.

Viola was an orphan. There was no one to whom she could naturally look for aid at such a time. It was necessary that some one should take into his hands that tangle of business affairs which Dudley Warner had left behind him. Morrison asked for this task, and Viola had no alternative but to intrust it to him. So when the dead had been laid to rest he went to work to bring order out of the strange chaos of debts, with the result that many men had sound pecuniary reason to bless the fate that had taken Dudley Warner out of the world.

It was a matter of months, and Morrison stretched it out as long as he could. He had begged of Viola the privilege of making no report to her until he could make a complete one. She was a child in matters of business and did not realize the nature of the obligation which he had assumed. She expected in the end a long schedule of debts which she would labor to pay. In the meantime she lived cheaply with her friends in Newark and narrowly met her expenses by the returns from a few puppets in music.

Morrison saw her rarely, and his life was haunted by the dread of what she must eventually face. It was in his heart many a time to falsify the whole series of accounts, to force a balance in Viola's favor and conceal from her forever the fact that the source of it was his own pocket. At the last he compromised the matter with his conscience. He would confess the fact that he had incurred some expense in the settlement of the estate, but would say that it was a trifle and would beg of her in the name of their old friendship to permit him to cancel it. And that was what he did.

She heard him through without comment or question, with a waiting calm that frightened him. He dreaded to hear her speak of him as a creditor, to hear her say that she would work to pay him. The cold sweat was on his forehead at the thought. For the best part of a year he had dragged this matter along, and she had worked as well as she could for a living. There is little more for a woman in this world.

When he had concluded his statement, he paused, and she was about to speak, but he checked her.

"Viola," he cried, "there is more than one man in this world for whom I would do this thing, and more, why can't I be the same friend to you that I would be to John Newton if he were in the same trouble? Why, he and I would laugh over it, since I am so rich. He would know that I was glad of the chance. Can't you look at it the same way? We'll say nothing about this money, and—and if you need some more—"

She checked him with a gesture, and it seemed to him that her face brightened with some hopeful thought.

"Can you tell me, indeed," she said, "that this is all a friendly service? Can you do this for me just as you would for your cousin? I can see how a man might accept it, but a woman seems always a beggar. Yet if you are my friend—"

She paused, and Morrison looked at her with a sort of agony. He was back again in the same familiar situation. The easy way was the false way, the way of a lie.

"Viola," he said, "there is something in me that is not quite honest. I am led too often to take the path of eva-



THE TWO MEN INCLINED THEIR HEADS.

sion, but—but I can't do it with you any more. I was punished for it once. I can't even now tell you this lie. There is no more similarity between my feeling for you and my friendship for Jack Newton than there is between fire and ice. Take what I offer because I love you, and let me go away and never see you again. That's the honest way, and my soul won't let me consider any other."

"Once," said she, "you came to me with less than the truth, and you ceased to be yourself. You went out of the world for me. Just now you have quite come back. Langdon, in the light of the truth that you have told me, I will take all you have to give, and I will give you all in return."

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To the Ladies Especially.

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We haven't space to mention all the values we carry in stock. Here are a few:

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We have a nice and large line, such as Flannels, Cheviots, Brilliantines, Fancy Stripes, Flannel Waisting, Suiting, Silks and many others, which must be sold.

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We have a nice line of Shirts, Suspenders and neckwear that is superb. Gloves for both ladies and Gents, in nearly all grades.

Part's Cloth.

We carry a full assortment of these goods, which we are selling cheap. In fact, we are prepared to cloth the man from head to foot, for here you will find Hats and Caps, Coats, Vests and Pants for the body and Shoes for the feet. If you can't be suited in stock in the way of Clothing we have sample books and are prepared to take your measure, and in a short time the suit is to hand. What more can we ask?

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