

# FRAN

BY  
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## God Covering Adam

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TEXT—And unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.—Gen. 3:21.



It is written in Scripture that God "covereth himself with light as with a garment" (Psalm 104:2), and there are some who think we have a suggestion here of way in which our first parents were covered before the fall. But if so, they lost their outer glory with the inner, for no sooner did they commit sin, than

"the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked" (Gen. 3:7). At once they took steps to conceal their shame by making for themselves aprons of fig leaves. How inadequate was the provision! And so we read that, later on, after their trial had been held, the penalty pronounced, and blessed be God, the hope of a Savior held out to them, their need in the particular was also met. The text suggests the plan. A lamb was slain, its blood was shed, and its covering appropriated for the guilty pair. The whole circumstance is not only a beautiful, but a most important symbol of God's dealings with the sinner in the spiritual realm.

1. Sin is an eye-opener. And this may be said even though it is equally true that the sinner is blind. How often he starts on a new career of iniquity, expecting satisfaction and pleasure, only to discover himself woefully disappointed and deceived. Happy is he, if at such a time, the power of the Holy Spirit works within him that deeper conviction of what sin really is and does, that may lead him to seek eternal salvation from it.

2. The awakened sinner not infrequently attempts by his own revising to rid himself of the consequences of sin. The fig leaves he employs are good resolutions, the temporary relinquishment of some bad habit, the giving up of some form of vice, staying at home nights, doing some deed of charity, attending church, perhaps "professing religion," as it is sometimes called.

3. God only can cover the sinner's sin. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior." This is Paul's testimony to Titus, and it is the experience of every soul that is really saved (Titus 3: 5, 6).

4. God covers our sin by a method of his own. As the prophet Isaiah sings: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10).

5. God obtains this covering of righteousness for us by the offering up of the life of the innocent for the guilty. "He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all" (Romans 8:32). "He made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Do we not see how purposely God's covering of Adam symbolizes what he is ready to do in the case of any fallen sinner who realizes his need? Do you realize yours? Are you trying vainly to help yourself, to cover your own spiritual nakedness? Why not accept God's covering? Why not take Jesus Christ as your Savior by faith? It is so easy to do this. As an unknown author has said so beautifully:

You ask me how I ever came to Christ?  
I do not know;  
There came a longing for Him in my soul  
So long ago.  
I found earth's fairest flowers would fade  
and die,  
I yearned for something that would satisfy;  
And then at last somehow I seemed to dare  
To lift my broken heart to Him in prayer.  
I do not know,  
I can not tell you how;  
I only know  
He is my Savior now.

You ask me why I ever came to Christ?  
I can reply:  
It is a wondrous story; listen while  
I tell you why  
My heart was drawn at length to seek His face.

I was alone, I had no resting place;  
I heard of how He loved me, with a love  
Of depth so great—of height so far above  
All human ken,  
I longed such love to share,  
And sought it then  
Upon my knees in prayer.

You ask me why I thought this loving  
Christ  
Would heed my prayer?  
I knew He died upon the cross for me,  
I called Him there.  
I heard His dying cry, "Father, forgive!"  
I saw Him drink death's cup that I might  
live;  
My head was bowed upon my breast in  
shame,  
He called me, and in penitence I came.  
He heard my prayer—  
I cannot tell you how,  
Or when, or where;  
Only I love Him now.

like the rest of the crowd. "Do you mean that you never want to see me again? Do you mean that you want me to marry Mr. Clinton?"

"I do not care what you do," he said, still more roughly.

"You do not care?" she stammered, bewildered. "What has happened? You do not care—for me?"

She looked deep into his eyes, but found no incense burning there. The shrine was cold.

"Mr. Gregory! And after all that has passed between us? After I have given you my—myself—"

Gregory seized her arm, as if to hold her off. His eyes were burning dangerously. "I saw murder in your heart while you were watching Fran," he whispered fiercely. "That's my daughter, do you understand? I know you now, I know you now."

Grace stared after him with bloodless cheeks and smoldering eyes. Clearly, she decided, the sight of Fran's fearful danger had unbalanced his mind. But how could he care so much about that Fran? And how could he leave her, knowing that Robert Clinton was beginning to climb upward with eyes fastened upon her face?

But it was not the sight of Fran's danger that had for ever alienated Gregory from Grace Noir. In an instant, she had stood revealed to him as an unlovely monster. His sensitive nature, always abnormally alive to outward impressions, had thrilled responsively to the exultation of the audience. He had endured the agony of suspense, he had shared the universal enthusiasm. If, in a sense, he was a series of moods, each the result of blind impulse, it so happened that Gregory's hiss—"It's the hand of God," turned his love to aversion; she was appealing as a justification of personal hatred, to the God they were both betraying.

Grace began to tremble as she watched Robert Clinton coming up, and Hamilton Gregory descending. She had trusted foolishly to a broken reed, but it was not too late to preserve the good name she had been about to besmirch. The furnace-heat in which rash resolves are forged, was cooled. Gregory had deserted Fran's mother; he was false to Mrs. Gregory; he would perhaps have betrayed Grace in the end; but Clinton was at hand, and his adoration would endure.

In the meantime, the voice of Fran was to be heard above that of the happy crowd: "I love you all. You helped me do it. I should certainly have been mangled but for you perfect heroes. Yes, thank you. . . . Yes, I feel fine. . . . And, oh, men and women, I could just feel your spirits holding mine up till I was so high—I was in the clouds. That's what subdued Samson. He knew I wasn't afraid. He knew it! And I wanted to win out for your sakes as well as my own—yes I did! Thank you men. . . . Thank you, women. . . . Well, if here aren't the children, too—bless your brave hearts! . . . And is that your baby? My goodness, and what a baby it is! . . . No, I'm not a bit tired—"

She stopped suddenly, on feeling a crushing grip. She looked down, a frown forming on her brow, but the sun shone clear when she saw Abbott Ashton. She gave him a swift look, as if to penetrate his inmost thoughts.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Rushing up to his very face—"Samson!" she cried, impellingly.

Again he seemed to feel the lash upon his tawny skin.

"Samson. Up, Samson, up, Samson—up!"

Suddenly Samson wheeled about, and leaped upon the table.

Fran stamped her foot at the other lion. "Go to your place, Hercules!" she cried, with something like contempt.

Hercules slowly rose, stretched himself, then marched to his box. He looked from Fran to the immovable Samson waiting upon the table, then mounted to his place, and seemed to fall asleep.

And now, at last, Fran looked at the spectators. Stepping lightly to the bars, she threw kisses this way and that, smiling radiantly. "Oh!" she cried, with vibrating earnestness, "you people out there—you can't think how I love you! You've saved my life. You are perfect heroes. Now make all the noise you please."

"May we move?" called a cautious voice from a few feet away. It was Abbott Ashton, with eyes like stars.

Fran looked at him, wondering at his thoughts. She answered by an upward movement of her hand.

As though by a carefully rehearsed arrangement, the audience rose to its feet, band boys and all. Such a shout! Such waving of hats and handkerchiefs! Such unabashed sobs! Such inarticulate gasps of neighboring hands! The spectators had gone mad with joyful relief.

Fran leaped upon the table, and mounted Samson.

"Now, I'm a rough rider!" she shouted, burying her hands in the mane, and lying along the lion's back in true cowboy fashion. She plunged, she shouted loudly, but Samson only closed his eyes and seemed to sleep.

After that, making the lions return to their cramped side cages was a mere detail. The show was ended.

Fran, remaining in the empty cage, stood at the front, projecting her hand through the bars to receive the greetings of the crowd. Almost every one wanted to shake hands with her.

"Look, look!" Simon Jefferson suddenly grasped Robert Clinton's hand, and pointed toward the tent-roof. "There they are!"

Something very strange had happened up there, but it was lost to Clinton's keen jealous gaze—one of those happenings in the soul, which, however momentous, passes unobserved in the midst of the throng.

"Not so fast!" Grace cautioned Gregory. "We must wait up here till the very last—don't you see Mr. Clinton? And Simon Jefferson is now pointing us out. We can't go down that way—"

"We!" Gregory harshly echoed. "We! I have nothing to do with you, Grace Noir. Go to him, if you will!"

Grace turned ashen pale. "What do you mean?" she stammered. "You tell me to go to Mr. Clinton?"

"I tell you to go where you please. That girl yonder is my daughter, do you understand? Don't hold me back! I shall go to her and proclaim her as my child to the world. Do you hear me? That's my Fran!"

Grace shrank back in the suspicion that Hamilton Gregory had gone mad.



## IRVING WAS NOT ALL MIND

English Actor One of the Most Lovable of Men, According to Life-long Associate.

It has been said of Irving that he lacked feeling, that he was all mind and no heart. Speaking to me, Miss Ellen Terry said: "He is gentle, not tender." The late Henry Labouchere wrote of him that "he was always acting." Greater errors could not have been made. Irving knew enough of human nature to know that it is frequently selfish and in many ways infirm, and he realized that "there is no art to find the mind's construction in the face," but, essentially, he was one of the most loving and lovable of men—when and where he fully trusted. He was singularly sensitive to kindness, and any little token of remembrance that reached him from a friendly hand, if it were only a trifle—was inconceivable as a cravat or a cigar case—was treasured by him with a gratitude almost pathetic. But he did not "wear his heart upon his

sleeve," and he did not trust many persons. He had suffered much, and he was lonely to the last. He was one of the most intellectual persons that ever trod the stage, but those who knew him best could testify that his sympathy was as wide as the widest experience of mankind and as deep as the deepest feelings of compassion and tenderness that ever possessed the human heart.—William Winter, in Collier's Weekly.

The Gallant.  
Judge—The lady from whom you stole a kiss declares herself ready to waive her demand for punishment if you will ask her pardon and express your regret for what has happened.  
Gentlemen (to the offended lady)—Yes, I am willing to beg your pardon. But to regret that I gave you the kiss, dear madam, that I cannot!

Not Her Fault.  
Mr. Robinson—What a singular girl you are, Miss Jones!  
Miss Jones (cooly)—Well, that can be altered, you know.—Stray Stories.



"Samson!" cried the woman, impellingly. The other lion was patiently standing on his end of the board, waiting. He seemed fast asleep. Samson, however, was wide awake and every cruel tooth was exposed as he stretched his mouth. In his amber eyes was the glow of molten copper.

Suddenly Samson wheeled about, and made a rush for his end of the see-saw. He stepped upon it. He was conquered. His haste to obey, evidently the result of fear and hatred, produced a ripple of laughter. The other lion, feeling the sudden tremor of Samson's weight, opened his eyes suddenly and twitched his tail. He was not asleep, after all.

Abbott found himself intensely nervous. He longed to have it all over, anxious, above all, to prove his fears groundless. Yet how were so many coincidences to be explained away? Fran had been a show-girl, a trainer of lions, and Abbott distinctly remembered that she had spoken of a "Samson." Fran had just these movements and this height. He missed Fran's mellow voice, but voices may be disguised; and the hands now raised toward the audience may have been stained dark. Who was that "sick friend" that Fran had possibly mentioned only as an excuse for escaping? Was that a subterfuge? And why this red mask which, according to Simon Jefferson, was an innovation?

At every trick, the black-maned lion barked. When the time came for the clown to hand the woman her violin he was afraid, and withdrew his arm with marvelous rapidity. His grotesque disguise could not hide his genuine uneasiness. The members of the band, too, played their notes with unusual care, lest the slightest deviation from routine work bring catastrophe. Nothing had gone right but the see-sawing act; but of all this, the crowd was ignorant.

After the violin playing—"Now," Simon Jefferson announced, gleefully, "there's only one more act, but it's a corker, let me tell you—that's why she's resting a minute. La Goniatti gets astride of Samson—the one that's mad—and grabs his mane, and pretends to ride like a cowboy. Calls herself a rough rider. Makes Samson get on top of that table, then she gets on top of him."

"But this isn't La Goniatti," Abbott protested, shuddering again.

"Now you've said something. That's right. But it looks like she's game—she'll try it—we'd better stand a little farther back."

A hand was laid upon Abbott's arm. "Abbott," said the voice of Robert Clinton, harsh from smothered excitement, "you went to Gregory's house—did you see him?"

Abbott did not hear. The refractory lion, knowing that his time had come to be ridden, was asserting his independence. He would not leap upon the table. The other lion stood watching sleepily to see if he would obey.

"That you, Clinton?" Simon's greeting was tense with enjoyment. "Got here for the best of it didn't you! Seems to me I saw Gregory somewhere not long ago, but I wasn't thinking about him."

"Hercules!" the masked woman addressed the gentler of the lions. "Go to your place. Hercules—go to your place!"

Hercules turned to his blue box, and seated himself upon it, leaving his tail to take care of itself.

The show-girl was fiercely addressing the black-maned lion. "Now! Now! To the table! To the table!"

Samson did not budge. Facing the woman of the mask, he opened his mouth, revealing the red cave of his throat—past the ivory sentinels that not only stood guard, but threatened, one could look down and down. This was no yawn of weariness, but a sign of rebellion—a sort of noiseless roar.

The trainer retreated to the farther side of the cage, then made a forward rush, waving her whip, and shouting clangorously, "Up, Samson, up Samson, up!" She did not pause in her course till close to his face.

Again he opened his mouth, baring every tooth, voiceless, but unconquered.

Hercules, finding that affairs had come to a halt, slowly descended from his box, keeping his half-opened eyes upon the woman. Restlessly he began to pace before the outer door.

The slight figure withdrew several steps, then smote the rebellious lion a sharp blow across the mouth. He snapped at the lash. It slipped away from between his teeth. Having rescued her whip, she shouted to the other lion: "Back to your place, Hercules. Hercules—back to your place!"

She stood pointing sternly toward the box, but Hercules stretched himself across the place of exit and lay watching her covertly.

The faces of the band boys had become of a yellowish paleness.

From behind the mask came the voice so loud that it sounded as a scream—"Up, Samson, up, Samson—up!"

Then it was that Samson found his voice. A mighty roar shook the loosely-set bars of the central cage—they vibrated visibly. The roar did not come as one short sharp note of defiance; it rose and fell, then rose anew, varying in the inflections of the voice of a slave who dares to threaten, fears even while he threatens, and gathers passion from his fear.

At that fearful reverberation, the audience started up, panic-stricken. Hitherto, the last act had been regarded as a badly-played comedy; now tragedy was in the air.

Gregory and Grace Noir at that instant, became alive to their surroundings. Hitherto, despising the show, rebellious at the destiny which had forced them to attend it, they had been wholly absorbed in their efforts to escape observation. The roaring of the lion startled them to a perception of the general alarm.

Grace clung to Gregory. "Oh, save me!" she panted hysterically.

The voice of the woman behind the bars rang throughout the tent—"Sit down!" The voice was not loud, now, but singularly penetrating. "Sit down, all of you, and remain absolutely motionless, or I am lost!"

Grace Noir, her eyes closed, her cheeks pallid, leaned her head upon Gregory's shoulder, quivering convulsively.

"There, there," Gregory whispered in her ear, soothingly, "everything will be all right."

The masked woman for the second time addressed the terrified audience, still not venturing to turn her head in their direction: "Whoever moves, or speaks, or cries aloud, will be my murderer. I have only one hope left, and I'm going to try it now. I ask you people out there to give me just this one chance for my life. Keep absolutely still."

Again Samson uttered his terrible roar. It alone was audible. Tier above tier, faces rose to the tent-roof, white and set. The audience was like one huge block of stone in which only faces have been carved.

The penetrating voice addressed the band boys: "Don't play. He can tell you're frightened."

The agitated music ceased.

Then the woman walked to the farthest side of the enclosure. In doing so she was obliged to pass the crouching form of Hercules, but she pretended not to know he was there; she moved slowly backward, always facing Samson.

At last the vertical bars prevented farther retreat. Then she lifted her hand slowly, steadily, and drew off her crimson mask. It dropped at her feet. Despite the muffled street-noises that never ceased to rumble from afar, the whispering sound of the silken mask, as it struck the plank floor of the cage, was distinctly audible.

"Grace!" Gregory whispered in horror—"it's Fran!"

Grace started from his embrace at the name and glared down upon the stage. She sat erect, unsupported, petrified.

Gregory's brow was moistened with a chilled dew. "It's Fran," he murmured, "it's Fran! Grace—pray for her!"

Fran looked Samson steadily in the eyes, and Samson glared back fixedly. For a few moments, this quiver between life and death remained at the breaking point. Had a stranger at that moment looked under the tent-entrance, he might have thought everybody asleep. There was neither sound nor movement.

Grace whispered—"It is the hand of God!"

Her tone was almost inaudible, but Gregory shrank as from a mortal blow; its sinister meaning was unmistakable. Swiftly he turned to stare at her.

In Grace's eyes was a wild and ominous glare akin to that of the threatening lion. It was a savage conviction that Fran was at last confronted by the justice of heaven.

Suddenly Fran crouched forward till her head was almost on a level with her waist, in so much that it was a physical exertion to hold her face up-lifted. In this sinuous position she was the embodiment of power. If she felt misgivings concerning this last resource, there was no look to betray it. Straight toward Samson she rushed, her body lithe and serpentine, her direction unerring.

To the beast, Fran had become one of those mysterious flying serpents which bite from afar. He felt the sting of her terrible eyes and his gaze grew shifty. It wandered away, and, on returning, found her teeth bared, as if feeling for his heart.



## SYNOPSIS.

Fran arrives at Hamilton Gregory's home in Littleburg, but finds him absent conducting the choir at a camp meeting. She repairs thither in search of him, laughs during the service and is asked to leave. Abbott Ashton, superintendent of schools, escorts Fran from the tent. He tells her Gregory is a wealthy man, deeply interested in charity work, and a pillar of the church. Ashton becomes greatly interested in Fran and while taking leave of her, holds her hand and is seen by Sapphira Clinton, sister of Robert Clinton, chairman of the school board. Fran tells Gregory she wants a home with him. Grace Noir, Gregory's private secretary, takes a violent dislike to Fran and advises her to go away at once. Fran hints at a twenty-year-old secret, and Gregory in agitation asks Grace to leave the room. Fran relates the story of how Gregory married a young girl at Springfield while attending college and then deserted her. Fran the child of that marriage. Gregory had married his present wife three years before the death of Fran's mother. Fran takes a liking to Mrs. Gregory. Gregory explains that Fran is the daughter of a very dear friend who is dead. Fran agrees to the story. Mrs. Gregory insists on her making her home with them and takes her to her arms. Fran declares the secretary must go. Grace begins nagging tactics in an effort to drive Fran from the Gregory home. Abbott, while taking a walk alone at midnight, finds Fran on a bridge telling her fortune by cards. She tells Abbott that she is the famous lion tamer, Fran Nonpareil. She tired of circus life and sought a home. Grace decides to ask Bob Clinton to go to Springfield to investigate Fran's story. Fran offers her services to Gregory as secretary during the temporary absence of Grace. The latter, hearing of Fran's purpose, returns and interrupts a touching scene between father and daughter. Grace tells Gregory she intends to marry Clinton and quit his service. He declares that he cannot continue his work without her. Carried away by passion, he takes her in his arms. Fran walks in on them and declares that Grace must leave the house at once. To Gregory's consternation he learns of Clinton's mission to Springfield. Clinton returns from Springfield and at Fran's request, Abbott urges him not to discuss what he has learned. On Abbott's assurance that Gregory will leave Gregory at once, Clinton agrees to keep silent. Driven into a corner by the threat of exposure, Gregory is forced to denounce Grace. Grace is offered the job of book-keeper in Clinton's grocery store. Gregory's infatuation leads him to seek Grace at the grocery. He finds her alone and tells her the story of his past. Grace points out that as he married the present Mrs. Gregory before the death of Fran's mother, he is not now legally married. They decide to flee at once. They attempt to escape during the excitement of a street fair and are forced to enter the lion tent to avoid Clinton.

## CHAPTER XXIII.—Continued.

The show-girl was fastened in the central cage. The clowns raised the inner doors, and the lions shot from their cramped quarters swift as tawny arrows. They were almost against the slight figure, without seeming to observe her. For the fourth time since noon they stood erect, sniffing the air, their bodies unconfined by galling timbers and chilling iron. For the fourth time this day, they were to be put through their tricks by force of fear. They hated these tricks, as they hated the small cages in which they could not lash their tails. They hated the "baby carriage" in which one was presently to sit, while the other pushed him over the floor, his sullen majesty sport for the rabble. They hated the board upon which they must see-saw, while the woman stood in the middle, preserving equilibrium.

But greater than the lion's hatred, was their fear of the woman; and greater than their fear of her was their terror of that long serpent which,



"Samson, Up! Samson, Up! Samson, Up!"

no matter how far it might dart through space, remained always in the woman's hand. They well knew its venomous bite, and as they slunk from side to side, their eyes were upon its coiling black tongue.

"I met Fran on the street," murmured Abbott, as he watched, unblinkingly. "She said she was going to visit a sick friend. When did you see Fran last, Simon?"

"Don't know," Simon said, discouragingly. "Now they're going to see-saw. The black-maned one is the hardest to manage. I reckon, one day, he'll just naturally jump awful of her, and tear her to pieces. Look at him! I don't believe this girl is going to make him get up on top of that board. My! how he is showing his teeth at her. Say! This is a pretty good show, hey? Glad you came, uh? Say! Look at his teeth!"

In truth, the black-maned lion opened his mouth to a frightful extent, making, however, not the slightest sound. He refused to budge.

Abbott shuddered.