



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 is the child of that marriage.

CHAPTER V.—Continued.

Fran regarded him with somber intensity. "I've asked for a home with you on the grounds that your wife was my best friend in all the world, and because I am homeless. You refuse. I suppose that's natural. I have to guess at your feelings because I haven't been raised among 'respectable' people. I'm sorry you don't like it, but you're going to provide for me right here. For a girl, I'm pretty independent; folks that don't like me are welcome to all the enjoyment they get out of their dislike. I'm here to stay. Suppose you look on me as a sort of summer crop. I enjoyed hearing you sing, tonight—

"We reap what we sow. We reap what we sow."

I see you remember." He shuddered at her mocking holy things. "Hush! What are you saying? The past is cut off from my life. I have been pardoned, and I will not have anybody forcing that past upon me."

Her words came bitingly: "You can't help it. You sowed. You can't pardon a seed from growing."

"I can help it, and I will. The past is no more mine than hers—our marriage was legal, but it bound me no more than it bound her. She chose her own companions. I have been building up a respectable life, here in Littleburg. You shall not overturn the labor of the last ten years. You can go. My will is unalterable. Go—and do what you can!"

Instead of anger, Fran showed sorrow: "How long have you been married to the second Mrs. Gregory—the present one?"

He turned his back upon her as if to go to the door, but he wheeled about: "Ten years. You understand? Ten years of the best work of my life that you want to destroy."

"Poor lady," murmured Fran. "The first Mrs. Gregory—my friend—has been dead only three years. You and she were never divorced. The lady that you call Mrs. Gregory now—she isn't your wife, is she?"

"I thought—" he was suddenly ashen pale—"but I thought that she believed her dead long ago—I was sure of it—positive. What you say is impossible—"

"But no one can sow without reap—"



"I am Mrs. Gregory."

ing," Fran said, still pityingly. "When you sang those words, it was only a song to you, but music is just a bit of life's embroidery, while you think it life itself. You don't sow, or reap in a choir loft. You can't sow deeds and reap words."

"I understand you, now," he faltered. "You have come to disgrace me. What good will that do you, or my first wife? You are no abstraction, to represent sowing and reaping, but a flesh-and-blood girl who can go away if she chooses—"

"She chooses to stay," Fran assured him.

"Then you have resolved to ruin me and break my wife's heart!"



# FRAN

BY JOHN BRECKENRIDGE ELLIS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY O. IRWIN MYERS

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"No, I'm just here to have a home." "Don't they say that the Kingdom of God may be taken by force? But you know more about the Kingdom than I. Let them believe me the daughter of some old boyhood friend—that'll make it easy. As the daughter of that friend, you'll give me a home. I'll keep out of your way, and be pleasant—a nice little girl, of any age you please." She smiled remotely. He spoke dully: "But they'll want to know all about that old college friend."

"Will you enjoy a home that you seize by force?"

"Naturally. Well, just invent some story—I'll stand by you."

"You don't know me," he returned, drawing himself up. "What! do you imagine I would lie to them?"

"I think," Fran remarked impersonally, "that to a person in your position—a person beginning to reap what he has sown, lying is always the next course. But you must act as your conscience dictates. You may be sure that if you decide to tell the truth, I'll certainly stand by you in that."

Helplessly driven to bay, he flashed out violently, "Unnatural girl—or woman—or whatever you are—there is no spirit of girlhood or womanhood in you."

Fran returned in a low, concentrated voice, "If I'm unnatural, what were you in the Springfield days? Was it natural for you to be married secretly when the marriage might have been public? When you went away to break the news to your father, wasn't it rather unnatural for you to hide three years before coming back? When you came back and heard that your wife had gone away to be supported by people who were not respectable, was it natural for you to be satisfied with the first rumors you heard, and disappear for good and all? As for me, yes, I have neither the spirit of girlhood nor womanhood, for I'm neither a girl, nor a woman, I'm nothing." Her voice trembled. "Don't rouse my anger—when I lose grip on myself, I'm pretty hard to stop. If I let everything rush on my mind—how she—my friend—my sweet darling friend—how she searched for you all the years till she died—and how even on her death-bed she thought maybe you'd come—"

Fran choked back the words. "Don't!" she gasped. "Don't reproach me, or I'll reproach you, and I mustn't do that. I want to hide my real heart from you—from all the world. I want to smile, and be like respectable people."

"For God's sake," whispered the other frantically, "hush! I hear my wife coming. Yes, yes, I'll do everything you say, but oh, don't ruin me. You shall have a home with us, you shall have everything, everything."

"Except a welcome," Fran faltered, frightened at the emotion she had betrayed. "Can you show me to a room—quick—before your wife comes? I don't want to meet her, now, I'm terribly tired. I've come all the way from New York to find you; I reached Littleburg only at dusk—and I've been pretty busy ever since!"

"Come, then," he said hastily. "This way—I'll show you a room. . . . It's too late," he broke off, striving desperately to regain composure.

The door opened, and a woman entered the room hastily.

CHAPTER VI.

Mrs. Gregory. The wind had suddenly increased in violence, and a few raindrops had already fallen. Apprehensions of a storm caused hurried movements throughout the house. Blinding flashes of lightning suggested a gathering of the family in the reception hall, where, according to tradition, there was "less danger;" and as the unknown lady opened the door of the front room, Fran heard footsteps upon the stairs, and caught a glimpse of Grace Noir descending.

The lady closed the door behind her before she perceived Fran, so intent was she upon securing from threatening rain some unfinished silk-work lying on the window-sill. She paused abruptly, her honest brown eyes opened wide.

The perspiration shone on Hamilton Gregory's forehead. "Just a moment," he uttered incoherently—"wait—I'll be back when I make sure my library window's closed. . . . He left the room, his brain in an agony of indecision. How much must be told? And how would they regard him after the telling?"

"Who are you?" asked the lady of thirty-five, mildly, but with gathering wonder. The answer came, with a broken laugh, "I am Fran." It was spoken a little defiantly, a little menacingly, as

if the tired spirit was bracing itself for battle.

The lady wore her wavy hair parted in the middle after that fashion which perhaps was never new; and no impudent ribbon or arrogant flounce stole one's attention from the mouth that was just sincere and sweet. It was a face one wanted to look at because—well, Fran didn't know why. "She's no prettier than I," was Fran's decision, measuring from the natural standard—the standard every woman hides in her own breast.

"And who is Fran?" asked the mild voice. The lady smiled so tenderly, it was like a mellow light stealing from a fairy rose-garden of thornless souls.

Fran caught her breath while her face showed hardness—but not against the other. She felt something like holy wrath as her presentment sounded forth protestingly—"But who are you?"

"I am Mrs. Gregory."

"Oh, no," cried Fran, with violence.



Fran Suggested Honor.

"no!" She added rather wildly, "It can't be—I mean—but say you are not Mrs. Gregory."

"I am Mrs. Gregory," the other repeated, mystified.

Fran tried to hide her emotion with a smile, but it would have been easier for her to cry, just because she of the patient brown eyes was Mrs. Gregory.

At that moment Hamilton Gregory re-entered the room, brought back by the fear that Fran might tell all during his absence. How different life would have been if he could have found her flown!—but he read in her face no promise of departure.

His wife was not surprised at his haggard face, for he was always working too hard, worrying over his extensive charities, planning editorials for his philanthropic journal, devising means to better the condition of the local church. But the presence of this stranger—doubtless one of his countless objects of charity—demanded explanation.

"Come," he said bruskiy, addressing neither directly, "we needn't stop here. I have some explanations to make, and they might as well be made before everybody, once and for all. . . . He paused wretchedly, seeing no outlook, no possible escape. Something must be told—not a lie, but possibly not all the truth; that would rest with Fran. He was as much in her power as if she, herself, had been the effect of his sin.

He opened the door, and walked with a heavy step into the hall. Mrs. Gregory followed, wondering, looking rather at Fran than at her husband. Fran's keen eyes searched the apartment for the actual source of Hamilton Gregory's acutest regrets.

"Yes, there stood the secretary."

CHAPTER VII.

A Family Conference.

Of the group, it was the secretary who first claimed Fran's attention. In a way, Grace Noir dominated the place. Perhaps it was because of her splendidly developed body, her beauty, her attitude of unclaimed yet unrecognized authority, that she stood distinctly first.

As for Mrs. Gregory, her mild sloofness suggested that she hardly belonged to the family. Hamilton Gregory found himself instinctively turning to Grace, rather than to his wife. Mrs. Gregory's face did, indeed, ask why Fran was there; but Grace, standing at the foot of the stairs, and looking at Gregory with memory of her recent dismissal, demanded explanations.

Mrs. Gregory's mother, confined by paralysis to a wheel-chair, fastened upon the new-comer eyes whose brightness seventy years or more had not dimmed. The group was completed by Mrs. Gregory's bachelor brother, older than his sister by fifteen years.

This brother, Simon Jefferson, though stockily built and evidently well-fed, wore an air of lassitude, as if perennially tired. As he leaned back in a hall chair, he seemed the only one present who did not care why Fran was there.

Gregory broke the silence by clearing his throat with evident embarrassment. A peal of thunder offered him reprieve, and after its reverberations had died away, he still hesitated. "This," he said presently, "is a—the orphan—an orphan—one who has come to me from— She says her name is Frances."

"Fran," came the abrupt correction; "just Fran."

There was a general feeling that an orphan should speak less positively, even about her own name—should be, as it were, subdued from the mere fact of orphanhood.

"An orphan!" Simon Jefferson ejaculated, moving restlessly in his effort to find the easiest corner of his chair. "I hope nothing is going to excite me. I have heart-disease, little girl, and I'm liable to topple off at any moment. I tell you, I must not be excited."

"I don't think," replied Fran, with cheerful interest in his malady, "that orphans are very exciting."

Hamilton Gregory resumed, cautiously stepping over dangerous ground, while the others looked at Fran, and Grace never ceased to look at him. "She came here tonight, after the services at the Big Tent. She came here and, or I should say, to request, to ask—Miss Grace saw her when she came. Miss Grace knew of her being here." He seized upon this fact as if to lift himself over pitfalls.

Grace's eyes were gravely judicial. She would not condemn him unheard, but at the same time she let him see that her knowledge of Fran would not help his case. It did not surprise Mrs. Gregory that Grace had known of the strange presence; the secretary knew of events before the rest of the family.

Gregory continued, delicately picking his way: "But the child asked to see me alone, because she had a special message—a yes, a message to deliver to me. So I asked Miss Grace to leave us for half an hour. Then I heard the girl's story, while Miss Grace waited upstairs."

"Well," Simon Jefferson interposed irritably, "Miss Grace is accounted for. Go on, brother-in-law, go on, if we must have it."

"The fact is, Lucy—" Gregory at this point turned to his wife—for at certain odd moments he found relief in doing so—the fact is—the fact is, this girl is the—daughter of—of a very old friend of mine—a friend who was—a friend years ago, long before I moved to Littleburg, long before I saw you, Lucy. That was when my home was in New York. I have told you all about that time of my youth, when I lived with my father in New York. Well, before my father died, I was acquainted with—this friend. I owed that person a great debt, not of money—a debt of—what shall I say?"

Fran suggested, "Honor."

Gregory mopped his brow while all looked from Fran to him. He resumed desperately: "I owed a great debt to that friend—oh, not of money, of course—a debt which circumstances

prevented me from paying—from meeting—which I still owe to the memory of that—of that dead friend. The friend is dead, you understand, yes, dead."

Mrs. Gregory could not understand her husband's unaccustomed hesitancy. She inquired of Fran, "And is your mother dead, too, little girl?"

That simple question, innocently preferred, directed the course of future events. Mr. Gregory had not intentionally spoken of his friend in such a way as to throw doubt upon the sex. Now that he realized how his wife's misunderstanding might save him, he had not the courage to undeceive her.

Fran waited for him to speak. The delay had lost him the power to reveal the truth. Would Fran betray him? He wished that the thunder might drown out the sound of her words, but the storm seemed holding its breath to listen.

Fran said quietly, "My mother died three years ago."

Mrs. Gregory asked her husband, "Did you ever tell me about this friend? I'd remember from his name; what was it?"

It seemed impossible for him to utter the name which had sounded from his lips so often in love. He opened his lips, but he could not say "Josephine." Besides, the last name would do. "Derry," he gasped.

"Come here, Fran Derry," said Mrs. Gregory, reaching out her hand, with that sweet smile that somehow made Fran feel the dew of tears.

Hamilton Gregory plucked up spirits. "I couldn't turn away the daughter of my old friend. You wouldn't want me to do that. None of you would. Now that I've explained everything, I hope there'll be no objection to her staying here in the house—that is, if she wants to stay. She has come to do it, she says—all the way from New York."

Mrs. Gregory slipped her arm about the independent shoulders, and drew the girl down beside her upon a divan. "Do you know," she said gently, "you are the very first of all his New York friends who has come into my life? Indeed, I am willing, and indeed you shall stay with us, just as long as you will."

Fran asked impulsively, as she clasped her hands, "Do you think you could like me? Could—you?"

"Dear child"—the answer was accompanied by a gentle pressure, "you are the daughter of my husband's friend. That's enough for me. You need a home, and you shall have one with us. I like you already, dear."

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Fran less than ever, but her look was that of a hired secretary, saying, "With all this, I have nothing to do." Doubtless, when alone with Hamilton Gregory, she would express her sincere conviction that the girl's presence would interfere with his work—but these others would not understand.

Fran's unconventionalality had given to Mrs. Gregory's laugh a girlish note, but almost at once her face resumed its wonted gravity. Perhaps the slight hollows in the cheeks had been pressed by the fingers of care, but it was rather lack of light than presence of shadow, that told Fran something was missing from the woman's heart.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## GAS, DYSPEPSIA AND INDIGESTION

"Pape's Diapepsin" settles gassy stomachs in five minutes—Time!

You don't want a slow remedy when your stomach is bad—or an uncertain one—or a harmful one—your stomach is too valuable; you mustn't injure it. Pape's Diapepsin is noted for its speed in giving relief; its harmlessness; its certain unflinching action in regulating sick, sour, gassy stomachs. Its millions of cures in indigestion, dyspepsia, gastritis and other stomach trouble has made it famous the world over.

Keep this perfect stomach doctor in your home—keep it handy—get a large fifty-cent case from any dealer and then if anyone should eat something which doesn't agree with them; what they eat lays like lead, ferments and sours and forms gas; causes headache, dizziness and nausea; eructations of acid and undigested food—remember as soon as Pape's Diapepsin comes in contact with the stomach of such distress vanishes. Its promptness, certainty and ease in overcoming the worst stomach disorders is a revelation to those who try it.—Adv.

Then the Apparatus Is in Demand. A visitor was being shown through a lid lifting "athletic" club. The chief attraction seemed to be the liquid gymnastic department. However, there was a cheaply equipped gymnasium which showed evidences of disuse. There was dust on the Indian clubs and cobwebs on the dumbbells. "Don't the members ever use the equipment?" the visitor asked. "Oh, yes, occasionally—when a fight starts," was the reply.

## PLEASE PUBLISH THIS LETTER

Writes Lady Who can Now Walk Four Miles a Day Without Feeling Tired.

Boynton, Va.—Mrs. Fannie Boyd of this town, says: "I am sure I would have been in my grave, had it not been for Cardui, the woman's tonic, and I certainly cannot praise it enough, for it is worth its weight in gold. I am, today, a walking advertisement for Cardui.

Before taking Cardui, I could hardly walk across the floor, I was so weak I underwent an operation last spring for womanly trouble, but felt no better.

After using 8 bottles of Cardui, the woman's tonic, my ulcers were all gone, I can eat hearty without suffering any pain, feel fine in every way, work all day, and can walk four miles a day without feeling tired.

Please publish this letter, as I would like for every woman to know what Cardui did for me."

Many letters, similar to the above, come to us, unsolicited, every day. This one should surely convince you of the merit of Cardui, as it expresses the earnest sentiment of a lady who has tried it.

If you suffer from any of the numerous ailments so common to women, such as headache, backache, nervousness, weakness, pains in sides and limbs, sleeplessness, etc., begin taking Cardui today. It will help you, as it has helped so many others, in the past half century.

N. B.—Write for Ladies' Advisory Dept., Chattanooga Medicine Co., Chattanooga, Tenn., for Special Instructions, and 64-page book, "Home Treatment for Women," sent in plain wrapper, on request. Adv.

Talking Machines. "Papa, did Edison make the first talking machine?" "No, son, the Lord made the first talking machine, but Edison made the one that could be shut off at will."

## GRANDMA USED SAGE TEA TO DARKEN HER GRAY HAIR

She Made Up a Mixture of Sage Tea and Sulphur to Bring Back Color, Gloss, Thickness.

Almost everyone knows that Sage Tea and Sulphur, properly compounded, brings back the natural color and lustre to the hair when faded, streaked or gray; also ends dandruff, itching scalp and stops falling hair. Years ago the only way to get this mixture was to make it at home, which is messy and troublesome. Nowadays, by asking at any store for "Wyle's Sage and Sulphur Hair Remedy," you will get a large bottle of this famous old recipe for about 50 cents.

Don't stay gray! Try it! No one can possibly tell that you darkened your hair, as it does it so naturally and evenly. You dampen a sponge or soft brush with it and draw this through your hair, taking one small strand at a time; by morning the gray hair disappears, and after another application or two, your hair becomes beautifully dark, thick and glossy. Adv.

Mean. "I have a very thick head of hair." "I guess it's the result of environment."

Constipation causes many serious diseases. It is thoroughly cured by Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. One a laxative, three for cathartic. Adv.

But the average man would have no use for mirrors if he could see himself in them as others see him.

Standing on one's merits is good but moving on them is better.

## COUGH DUE TO NERVOUSNESS

Not Dangerous, but Hard to Distinguish From That Where Bronchial Tubes Are Affected.

It frequently happens that persons hitherto in good health are suddenly seized with fits of coughing, which they have considerable difficulty in overcoming. Due to a general neurotic or hysterical nervous condition, this cough, owing to its particular characteristics, is termed "the nervous cough."

The nervous cough often cannot be distinguished in any way from the cough due to an affection of the respiratory passages. It sometimes occurs in the form of periodical, prolonged and very painful fits of coughing and sometimes as a continual short, dry cough. Its most characteristic symptom is that it ceases during sleep and begins again on waking. The patients while often a source of anxiety to those around them, are generally otherwise in very good health.

Another peculiarity of this cough is the absence of any secretion, for even after very prolonged fits of coughing there is rarely anything noticeable except a little saliva. Patients may sometimes succeed in checking the

cough, but not for long, and as a rule in such cases the next fit of coughing is all the more severe.

The nervous cough is particularly frequent between the ages of twelve and seventeen. It then often assumes the character of a barking cough. It is unattended by any serious danger, and does not induce any emphysema. Change of climate appears to have most effect upon it.

English Averse to Change. There is nothing more amusing in all the quaint and curious customs of the English house of commons than the strange ceremony which marks the termination of each session.

The moment the house is adjourned, loud-voiced messengers and policemen cry out in the lobbies and corridors: "Who goes home?"

These mysterious words have sounded night after night for centuries through the hall of parliament.

The custom dates from a time when it was necessary for members to get home in parties, accompanied by men carrying links or torches for common protection against the footpads who infested the streets of London. But though that danger has long since passed away, the question "Who goes home?" is still asked, night after night during the session of parliament.