Old as the Hills

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GEOFFREY'S WARD.

"I wish to see Geoffrey Algernon."

The well-trained servant expressed no surprise at the request, though he certainly did wonder what such a foreign looking midget wanted of his master.

"A lady to see Mr. Algernon," he announced, as he rapped at the drawing-room door.

The young lady followed him and stepped inside.

"To see me—Miss Algernon?" said a tall angular woman emphatically, arising and looking rather severely at the newcomer.

"No, Geoffrey Algernon," was the caller's placid response as she walked over to where a great fire was burning in the grate and began to warm herself in quite an easy and homelike manner.

your father's trust and strive to make you happy."

She bowed her head over his hand and left a glistening tear on it.

"I am glad to have found you!" she exclaimed. "I thought no one would ever love me again."

"This is my sister, Miss Algernon, and her friend Miss Penrose," he continued, in a slightly embarrassed tone. "Lucretia, this is Ora Decrus, Colonel Decrus' daughter; you remember him; and he has left his only child to my care."

Miss Lucretia advanced and shook hands with Ora in a very chilly fashion, and Miss Penrose followed the example. It was evident they both considered her an interloper, and Geoffrey's brow darkened.

"Where is your luggage?" he questioned. "When did you arrive?"

"My luggage is at the railway station. I arrived yesterday on the Southampton."

"Did you come alone?" he queried.

"No; I came with Captain Bright and his wife. They intended to bring me here, but a messenger awaited him at the docks to make him hasten to his father, who was dying. I told him to go. I could find you myself; but the captain of the vessel put me in the train, told the guard where to leave me, and I was sent up here in a carriage."

"And now you are here, we will look after you," said Geoffrey, cheerily. "Lucretia, see that Mary has a room prepared for her, with a fire kindled, for I see our little friend belongs to the tropics and loves the heat."

"Oh, yes," she said, "you are so kind. I am so cold! Is it always so cold here?"

He smiled.

"It will be colder before it is warmer. But we will not let you quite freeze."

Meanwhile Miss Lucretia had been attending to his orders, and returned, followed by Mary.

"Mary will see you to your room, Miss Decrus," she said, "and attend to you."

As soon as the door closed behind Ora Geoffrey turned to his sister.

"I wish you to be very kind to that friendless orphan for my sake," he said. "You remember I owe my life to Colonel Decrus, and now I cannot better repay my obligation than by caring for his daughter. She has no relatives living, the letter informs me, and her English governess was recently married, so could not come on with her. A Hindu servant was determined to follow, but her friends were afraid she would not be welcome, and so detained her."

"What a mercy they did!" exclaimed his sister.

"I should have been compelled to have found another home," observed Miss Penrose. "I should have been able to have thought of nothing but thugs and secret poisons. One's life would not have been safe a moment."

"Please don't express your fears to Miss Decrus," Geoffrey returned, "as her mother was an Indian princess."

The two ladies threw up their hands in horror.

"And she is half Indian! Good heavens, what will we do?"

"Behave like sensible women," was the response. "Miss Decrus will not hurt you, I am sure."

Ora led a very secluded life at the Oaks, and did not seem to care much for other society than that of her guardian, and then he took her on long drives and allowed her even to sit in his studio, where no one else was admitted.

Miss Penrose ground her teeth in rage. She had long looked upon Geoffrey as her property.

He had never seemed to fancy her, but she was his sister's dearest friend, and as long as he paid no attention to anyone else she was sure it would end right.

Meeting Ora one day, she said, affectedly:

"Am I not a good creature to let you have my lover so much?"

"Your lover?"

"Oh, yes. It's a long standing engagement. But don't mention it to dear Geoffrey; he might be annoyed."

"Yes; if he had wished me to have known he would have told me."

[illegible]

that her eyes would not stay open, and soon after midnight she fell asleep. Geoffrey was wide awake. Somebody crept into his room stealthily. She had on a crimson shawl such as Ora wore, and cautiously crept to the table and poured a powder into his medicine glass. He made one spring from the bed and caught her in his arms.

"Look at my would-be murderess, Lucretia!" he cried, pulling the shawl off and revealing Miss Penrose.

Lucretia shrieked, and her shriek brought Ora and the servants rushing into the room.

"O Mr. Geoffrey, your betrothed wife!" Ora sobbed.

"My betrothed wife; who said so?"

"She did," was the response.

"You did!" he said, almost shaking her. "I saw you last night, but was not sure that it was you, Miss Penrose. I did not drink the water into which the powder was put. My sickness was all feigned, so as to be able to catch you."

She gave a shriek.

"Forgive me!" she cried in terror. "I was so jealous of her I would rather be dead than see you married to her. Oh, don't have me hanged!"

"No; for hanging is too good for you!" he retorted. "Tomorrow morning you leave here at the earliest hour possible, and never let me see your face again. To satisfy you I will tell you your meditated crime was uncalled for. Miss Decrus was engaged to General Vanguard's son before she came here, and is only waiting two years here, in compliance with her father's wishes, before she is married. She now looks for Captain Vanguard to visit her, as he is expected daily from India on business."

"And is in London now, guardie!" Ora cried. "He will be here tomorrow."

On the morrow Miss Penrose left without her dearest friend, Lucretia, bidding her farewell, and she was never heard of more.

She realized that her malicious designs had frustrated all her chances in regard to Geoffrey Algernon.

He is a bachelor yet, though last year Ora was married from his house and returned to Calcutta with her husband.

Hunted a Bear and Found Silver.

J. S. Altenhaus, who lives in the Big Horn mountains, in northern Wyoming, while out hunting recently came upon the tracks of a big silver-tipped bear and followed the trail to the mouth of a mountain cave. A deep-throated growl and the shining of phosphorescent eyes betrayed bruin's position, and a close and cool shot ended his career. In removing the bear the attention of Mr. Altenhaus was attracted to a mineral vein showing on the cavern wall. Securing samples of the rock, an assay was afterward made, which gave returns of forty per cent lead and 200 ounces of silver to the ton. The vein is about four feet in width and extends for the full length of the cavern, some 300 feet. Mr. Altenhaus named the claim the "Silver Tip."

Fully Equipped.

Sir Robert Peel was once going through a picture collection with a friend where there was a portrait of a prominent Englishman who was famous for saying sharp things. "How wonderfully like!" said the friend. "You can see the quiver on his lips." "Yes," replied Sir Robert, "and the arrows coming out of it."

Sometimes a noble failure serves the world as faithfully as a distinguished success.—Dowden.

TEACHING PERSISTENCE.

Even Mere Babes Can Be Encouraged in the Habit of Trying Again.

Few little children, of course, voluntarily set themselves to overcome difficulties, yet more would do so if parents and nurses were not in the habit of catering to that flightiness characteristic of all young things, which leads them to follow up whatever momentarily attracts their attention. The capacity to dwell for a long time on one thought involves both intensity of desire and innate ambition to reach right results. I have seen this struggle for perfection in an incipient form show itself in a little child but 18 months old. And how sincerely I respected that little one. He was sitting in his mother's lap beside the library table one evening, when in an idle mood she took up a penny and set it on the head of a small gilt image three or four inches high and with a head scarcely larger than the head of the coin. [illegible] until at last he succeeded in balancing the coin on the head of the image. "The brave baby!" We gave him a round of applause and he looked from one to the other of us with a curious little glance of satisfaction. The next day he could not be prevailed upon to undertake the same feat again. Once having demonstrated that he could do it the act lost its interest. Here was a tiny hero in want of difficulties to conquer, an infant Newton, excelling in the ability to concentrate his whole mind upon a single object so long as it was necessary for that [illegible]

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