

"He's ashamed to have her see him," she guessed shrewdly.

As it was one of the peculiarities of the lady to confide in all persons with whom she was on speaking acquaintance, Marie had known for a long time of the skeleton in the Pattern closet.

"Here he's been two years a-practicin' he calls it," Mrs. Pattern had told the girl. "Lord! the money we've spent on him, without his earnin' so much as a dollar. It makes me sick to think of it."

Then the lady had thrashed about and worked the harder, as though by her frugality she would make good the useless expenditure.

One day Charl stood watching Marie as she deftly formed the petals of a rose with her brush.

"Will you take a pupil, Miss Marie?" he asked.

Marie turned wonderingly.

"I would like to learn."

Then he closed his mouth and his heavy, handsome face was set in its almost lifeless mask, as though he had never uttered such a remarkable request. The day following Mrs. Pattern glanced into the library, and started back as if she had seen an apparition. Charl sat busily working at a canvas.

Day after day his industry continued. At the table they discussed light and shade, to Mrs. Pattern's open-mouthed astonishment. When it became rumored on Cliff street that Charl had artistic tastes, young people began calling at the Pattern mansion. A result of this co-mingling soon appeared in the formation of the Sea Gull Artistic Society, and, to Mrs. Pattern's great elation, her Charl was elected president.

"Well, I yum! An' I thought he wan't good for nothin' but washin' dishes!" was her exclamation.

She was extremely penitent, and treated her son with due homage. Young ladies and gentlemen were now continually calling, and Charl worked harder and harder. A short time later Mrs. Pattern nearly fainted as she read in the *City Daily News* the report of a meeting of the Essex Club and the remarks of the club's guest, "Mr. Charles Pattern, the rising young artist."

"He's a-gettin' on wonderful," exclaimed the proud mother. "He's as smart as I thought him lazy," and she bustled around the neighborhood sounding his praises.

A stranger had rented the adjoining estate while the family of the owner were making a European tour. Mrs. Pattern had much desired an acquaintance, but the new neighbors encouraged no social intimacy. A young lady was often seen walking on the bluff, and a tall, dignified, white-haired gentleman drove away from the house every morning.

"Their name's Goldthurst," Mrs. Pattern announced, triumphantly, one evening at tea. "I read it on a box that come by express. Goldthurst's a queer

name, I yum. Just the right name for such stuck-up folks."

Charl took no interest in the next establishment, but labored on his canvas diligently. He was working out an original design, he told his mother, and that lady echoed it throughout the entire artistic circle. It was resolved that on the completion of the picture a reception should be given in honor of the event.

"We'd ought to be willin' to pay for a celebration," Mrs. Pattern declared, "it's the first time he's done anythin'."

Delicately scented cards were circulated through the "street," apprising the fortunate recipients of the near approach of the day when the original design would be exhibited. Mrs. Pattern's cup of happiness was full when she received a note from Mrs. Goldthurst accepting the kind invitation, and she determined that the reception should be one that would afterward be referred to as the event of the season. She resolved, among other things, a surprise for Charles. Consequently her son had hardly left home for the city on the day before the unveiling, before the Pattern carriage whisked out of the gate. An hour later it whisked in again, and, drawing up before the front door, a man descended and ran nimbly up the steps. Mrs. Pattern meeting him in the hall, he was at once conducted to the library, where hung the picture. Beside it on the table stood a decanter of port.

"I thought you'd be tired after your ride," apologized the lady.

The man allowed a generous quantity of the liquor to flow down his throat, gave a longing look at the decanter, and advanced to the picture as Mrs. Pattern withdrew the cloth. The man looked and blinked.

"It's a—"

"Yes, that's it," encouraged Mrs. Pattern.

"A sea serpent."

Now, had Charl been more open with his mother the wrong could have been righted at once. Mrs. Pattern gave another hasty glance at the canvas. It did resemble a sea serpent, and the man's exultant tones convinced her.

"Good!" she cried. "You've hit it."

The man drank another glass of port and re-entered the carriage. When Charl arrived home his proud mother thrust into his hand the *Evening Chronicle*. An article marked with blue pencil read—

Our reporter called at the Pattern mansion this morning, and was rewarded by a peep at the picture which is to be exhibited to-morrow to the elite of Linn. The artist has achieved a wonderful blending of sky and water, and the graceful contour of the huge ophidion, as he plunges about in playful sport, speaks of careful study and shows a handling of a difficult subject with a boldness surprising in an amateur. The rooms of the artist overlook the ocean, which fact may account for the